The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

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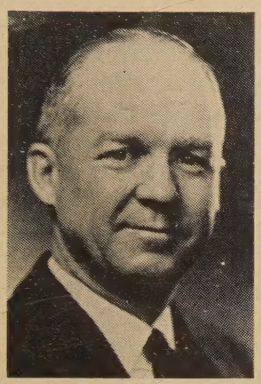

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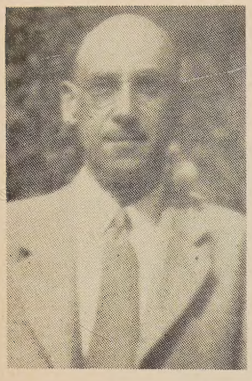

By Abbott P. Herman

PREACHERS MUST

MY JOB," a preacher friend told me, "is to set forth in my preaching the great principles of our faith. It is up to the parishioner to apply them." This statement was made in response to my charge that sermons are too general, that most preaching deals too much with abstractions.

"Take that great principle of our faith," continued my friend, "that we should love one another. Now, I use an opportunity in almost every sermon to make reference to this principle and to illustrate it. Surely, this in time must have some influence on the behavior of a congregation."

My contention, however, is that, unless such a cardinal principle is spelled out and given sharp definition in terms of attitudes for all areas of life, it remains, for the most part, an abstraction. Like some vaccinations, it does not "take."

Moral Contradictions

My friend's position that preaching should remain general is fairly typical of the opinion of most preachers. This conviction has persisted in spite of the repeated findings of educational psychology that learning takes place only to the degree to which a generalization is translated into details of behavior patterns. William James said, "No one sees farther into a generalization than his own knowledge of its details extends." Hartshorne and May, in their *Studies in Deceit,* demonstrated that unless the principle of honesty was made concrete in every variety of social situation it had no meaning for the child. Consequently, Sunday school children, as much as the non-Sunday school group, were found to be dishonest in experiences for which they were not adequately guided.

It is not too much to say that many of the conflicts between faith and practice are due in large part to the partial failure of religion to apply principles to concrete situations. Such application admittedly is exceedingly difficult, and only sharp analysis of social processes can reveal how ideals may be made effective in every phase of living. Consequently, no moral judgment on the religious institution or on ministers is implied in this failure.

There are, of course, many contradictions in the behavior of the Christian. An individual may be a loyal churchman, active and hard-working in the church, yet in business he may resort to practices far out of line with his precepts. The Christian realtor may have no scruples about putting on the market a $2,500 adobe house for the inflated price of $10,000. Or he may oppose housing legislation to protect his own interests and even label "socialistic" the efforts of the federal government to provide housing for those who cannot afford to pay regular rents. An advertiser may be nominally a Christian and church member yet use questionable means to sell his commodities. One need only listen to radio and television commercials to see how inaccurate and unfounded some of the claims are.

Sermons Are too General

When discrepancies between faith and practice are recognized—usually they are not—individuals manifesting the inconsistencies are blamed. They are said to be calloused in conscience or dishonest or hypocritical or selfish. My judgment is that such contradictions are the result not so much of deliberate dishonesty or hypocrisy as of ignorance concerning the application of religious principle to all areas of life. This may be traced directly to the failure of the church to define how its great objectives may be transferred to everyday attitudes. And this failure in turn may be said to be due in large part to the failure of our preaching. After all, preaching is the most frequently used channel of communication to convey to church members the great ends of our faith.

There are good reasons why preaching remains so generalized. The most obvious one is that religion deals with the great ends of life, with principles and ideals. Preaching naturally reflects this.

Another reason is that we live in a very complicated and increasingly impersonal world. Our urban society is so intricately structured that it is almost impossible for the person with average training to understand the relation of cause and effect. Yet religious concepts are derived or stem

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BE SOCIAL SCIENTISTS

primarily from intimate, small-group relationships. Such concepts as the fatherhood of God, brotherhood of man, forgiveness, sharing, sacrifice, friendship, neighborliness, love, are all based on experiences in the family or in highly personal relationships. These concepts seem to be inappropriate—though they could be made appropriate—for our impersonal, industrial and urban society. What does love mean in a city like Los Angeles or in the relations of capital to labor? What does forgiveness mean in an environment which spawns thousands of delinquents and criminals? What do sharing and sacrifice mean in a competitive society?

The Social Sciences

A third factor is that ministers are not sufficiently aware of the findings of the social sciences. Behavior and social situations are more complex than the energy within the atom. The specialist alone can unravel causes, effects and relationships, and even he can as yet do so incompletely. Still the untrained person often speaks confidently and readily about what is wrong and what must be done. Oversimplification of social processes is the minister's greatest bottleneck in problem solving.

On the positive side it may be said more and more pre-ministerial students are majoring in the social sciences in their undergraduate years. But this number is still small, and what the student may gain from his college training is somewhat, if not largely, diluted by immersion in three years of seminary training which leaves little room for the welding of social science knowledge and religious ends.

To be sure, social ethics courses in seminaries attempt to deal with concrete social situations. But most ethics courses by their very nature are more concerned with ends and norms than they are with the detailed analysis of situations or with the processes necessary to transform the situations. Christian ethics may establish what are desirable ends for business, for example, but the science of effective human relations is necessary to determine how these ends may be realized. Scientific analysis should reveal what attitudes and forces resist the achievement of Christian ends, where the attitudes come from, and what may be done to change them. Such attitudes, it should be emphasized, cannot be obliterated. That is impossible. They must be understood, respected and guided to conform to desirable ends.

A recent effort to combine religion and social science is the new emphasis on pastoral psychology. It is encouraging to see this aspect of the pastor's work placed on a more scientific basis. And it is heartening to see the increasing number of seminaries which are adding courses in this field to their curriculum. This should not only better equip our future pastors to deal with personal problems, but also give them concrete help for more effective preaching.

Caution must here be injected. Pastoral psychology by its very nature is focused on the individual's problems. It becomes repair-minded. Troubled persons must be given care. But the pastor should ask himself whether there is not a more fundamental approach to his parishioners' problems. Must he wait for people to become warped, and then institute repairs?

If the pastor is not to be content with repairing damages after they occur, he must address himself to the basic factors which in the first place give rise to those damages. And for this he needs the best wisdom and understanding the social sciences can offer.

Dealing with Attitudes

One other factor which may be responsible for keeping sermons too general is that some preachers are unwilling to make the application to actual situations because they fear the reaction of certain groups within their congregation. After all, religious ends are full of dynamic implication; and if the application is too precise, it may cause certain parishioners to react violently. But preaching can stir the conscience without inciting the hearers to violence, and should seek to avoid vehemence to achieve its end. Social science knowledge should assist the minister to understand the attitudes within a parish so that he will know what he is dealing with, how far he can go without alienating, what attitudes he must cultivate gently and slowly. To pound the pulpit and insist that his way is the only way is to disregard a fundamental of the social sciences—that one must work with people on their own level and grant others the respect we claim for ourselves.

Those of us trained in both religion and the social sciences have this growing conviction: When preaching embraces more fully the social sciences, the potentialities of both will be more quickly realized, for each will stimulate the other to more complete fulfilment.

By G. Ray Jordan

I Met Micah in the Middle East

What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? Micah 6:8.

QUITE unexpectedly I met Micah in Lebanon. As a matter of fact, I practically bumped into him. It was at one of the refugee camps not many miles from Beirut. A United Nations official was speaking of "this tremendous injustice" which has been done more than a half million people. He was referring to the hundreds of thousands of Arabs being made homeless in order to make room for the homeless Jews. Neither this official nor anyone else suggested that the Jews should be forgotten, or that there should be no country to which they could go in safety and with a sense of security. Indeed, when I turned to look again at Micah, I thought I saw a smile of satisfaction on his face when another speaker referred to so many Jews returning home. It was evident, however, that this did not becloud his judgment. He insisted that we must "do justice and love mercy."

Some of the Arab refugees cried, "If you do not want us back home, kill us!" As we were leaving one camp, some pelted our bus with stones. Others shouted, "We would rather live in Palestine in caves than here in palaces." In private conversations still others had spoken pleadingly: "We ask you to tell the people in America what you see, and to give a correct picture. We do not have faith in America, but we do have some hope, since people like you are coming to see us."

Economics and Religion

Maybe they spoke in the heat of disappointment and anger. But they have had several years in which to become calm. They are susceptible, of course, to soviet propaganda. It is difficult, moreover, for idle people to sustain their morale, much less to cultivate the finest kind of morals. Yet many of the refugees in Lebanon and Jordan are not permitted to take remunerative jobs, because to do so would mean others would lose their source of income. The condition poses another serious problem. As is so frequently true, economics seems to be intricately bound up with religion.

As I listened to Dr. T. A. Lambie, however, and saw his new hospital being completed near an Arab refugee camp where 27,000 people are not living but existing, I was sure I saw Micah again. He was looking with approval on the humanitarian work of this Christian servant of thousands of needy people. He seemed to approve as wholeheartedly as he did of everything being done for his own people.

'Homecoming'

By ship and air Jewish "homecoming" refugees continue to arrive in Palestine. Government officials of Israel insist upon the word *homecoming* being used when reference is made to their fellow countrymen either from Central Europe, from Yemen or any other place. These refugees are quickly making the necessary adjustments in Israel. They are not long detained in camps as are the Arabs. When some of us passed through the barbed wire entanglement and walked over approximately a hundred yards of no-man's land which separates Jordan from Israel, we were almost immediately aware of an entirely different situation from that of the Arab city of Jerusalem. Again I heard Micah speaking. He was saying, "This should be a land of peace, not of pieces." The words were quite familiar. Several times they had fallen from the lips of keenly disappointed Arabs. But the thought was Micah's long before they suggested it. Indeed, the idea is at the heart of his oft-quoted admonition "to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God."

Another day while we are sitting with the commanding officer of Israel's army in Nazareth and hearing the explanation given for the presence of the armed forces, this strange turn of events after centuries became startlingly thought provoking. The words of this officer are almost exactly the same as those the Romans used two thousand years ago to explain their occupation of Palestine: "We are here to preserve the peace." But is it the peace of which the prophet dreamed, and concerning which later the angels sang?

As Malcolm Muggeridge has pointed out, these modern Jews—like the Israelites who left their Egyptian captivity—have brought treasures of ideas and techniques. Some of these, however, neither Micah nor Amos nor any other of the prophets could endorse. I heard the voice of Micah as we were looking at ruined Arab villages and

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remembering that brutality and intolerance have gone into the making of Israel. Also I recalled that millions of pounds sterling belonging to the Arabs were still held in the banks of Israel. I can see again the Arab orphanage I visited in Jerusalem, where live children whose parents were killed in attack. Through dim eyes I can see thousands of homeless old people. I see—and hear—embittered youth, impatient after waiting these years—as impatient as the Jews who have been brutally wronged and forced to wait an unreasonably long time for help.

It is an evening in Jerusalem. A representative of the foreign office is discussing some of Israel's problems. A listener asks what is to be done with a Lutheran church located in the Israeli sector of Jerusalem. The reply of the representative of the foreign office is that Israel had not yet decided what to do about this church. It was an offspring of the state church in Germany, and the Israeli still remember the terrific debt which Germany owes the Jews. It seems a most inopportune time for Micah to appear. Rather, one almost feels we should now be favored with the teaching of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. Certainly this seems fair. Who, moreover, could claim to be living on a much higher level? Interestingly enough, an American visitor had vehemently exclaimed only a few minutes before, "Let's forget religion and get on to something more practical."

Religion's Place

On the other hand, the brilliant Minister of Religion of Israel, whose wide reading and years of study made him a scholar of the first rate, insisted that if one is not orthodox, he is not religious. The secret organization of the Zealots recently attempted to blow up the Knesset (Parliament) as a protest against the driving of automobiles on the Sabbath. Micah seemed to think sound ethics, basic morality and a genuine personal experience were far more important.

Two of us had dinner in the home of a brilliant young doctor who had received his degree from the University of Vienna. While describing the protest of many young people of Palestine against the uncompromising attitude of the orthodox, our host told the story of a certain family who had learned to keep the ancient law at the same time they enjoyed the benefits of modern inventions. This particular family had placed a light switch under a loose tile near the bathroom. Since their religion did not permit members of the family to switch on the light after the Sabbath had begun, the head of the family would nonchalantly walk around the room until, ostensibly by chance, his foot would strike the loose tile which would switch on the light! This story vividly depicts the strange paradox now seen in Israel. It also suggests the reason for Micah's great concern for the fact that ethics are being given priority over ritualism.

While Israel demands freedom for worship, most of the young people—like most Americans—apparently interpret this as freedom *from* worship. Few youth in these communal groups are orthodox or seem to have any desire to support the services of the orthodox group. Yet three times in one conference the Minister of Religion declared that if one is not orthodox he is not religious. Recent protests against the presence of Christian missionaries make the message of Micah even more relevant.

Again a strange paradox meets us in the fact that Israel depends upon the only large-scale capitalistic society in the world. In spite of this, as Malcolm Muggeridge has pointed out in the London *Daily Telegraph,* the people still "hanker after the collectivism on which their first agricultural settlements were based." Although the Jews are opposed to the soviets, much of their greatest economic progress has been made within certain communal groups.

Some of these have achieved such marvelous results that the desert has literally blossomed like the rose. Trees are now shading land where for two thousand years there were no trees. Fruit is growing on hillsides where for centuries goats ate the scrubs which survived the heat and dry soil. There are grade-A dairies where once only slow-moving donkeys and camels were occasionally to be seen. There are homes where only at intervals tents of Bedouin were seen. Israel has done a marvelous job in developing the resources of the land.

I took another hurried glance, and then in imagination looked over the thousands of young people who are obviously not interested in any ancient ritualism of the synagogue. They are fervently idealistic. Many have come out to some of the most barren spots in the world to join communal groups in which all will have an equal chance. A comrade seemed to have the answer to this perplexing and confusing situation. "Is not this the essence of religion?" he asks. But I hear Micah: "One must also walk humbly with God." Have not all the idealistic communal groups which have tried to dispense with religion eventually disintegrated? Micah manifestly is right. Social ethics is not enough; there must be the undergirding of religion in the Middle East—and everywhere—if society is to survive.

If we face the future with any confidence whatsoever, we of the United States of America—and of the whole world—must be guided by justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God.

Denominational Number

The August issue of The Pulpit will be devoted to sermons by Lutheran pastors who have received the highest number of nominations from our readers.

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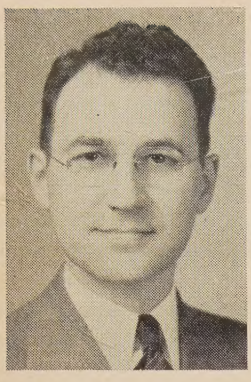

An Expository Sermon for Independence Sunday
On the Dangers of Compromise

Shields of Brass

By Dwight E. Stevenson

I Kings 14:25-28.

WHEN Rehoboam, son of the fabulous Solomon, came to the throne of Israel, there fell into his lap the broad realm and the vaunted wealth of a strong empire. His was the kingdom which David had conquered from Moab and Philistia, Ammon and Syria. His were the silver, the gold and the gems which Solomon had gathered with his buying and selling of horses and chariots and his commerce on the high seas. Spectacular power and luxurious riches were his, and he did not have to win them; they were an inheritance.

But within five years he had squandered or been plundered of nearly all of them. His immoderate cruelty drove more than half his subjects into armed rebellion. These angry citizens tore ten northern tribes away from the garment of his empire, leaving him trying to cover his nakedness with the shreds of Judah and Benjamin. Pharaoh Shishak of Egypt poised on the borders, watching these signs of internal weakness in the shriveling kingdom. Finally, in Rehoboam's fifth year, Egyptian armies spilled over into Judah and swept on into Jerusalem, plundering.

Outer Pageantry

Among the rich booty which these armies took were the golden shields of the king's guard. These shields, held ostentatiously in the hands of proud soldiers, had graced all state occasions. A blazing square of golden light, they had surrounded Solomon in the line of parade; or, a long golden avenue, made an aisle through which the king strutted from palace to Temple. These costly symbols of pomp and circumstance were carried away to the Nile. Both the empire and the wealth of David and Solomon were reduced to a shambles, and Rehoboam stood in the ruins of a vanished yesterday.

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But he was still the king, and he did his pathetic best to appear kingly. He ordered brass copies of the golden shields to be made and committed them to the captains who stood guard before the palace. Whenever the king strode from his royal chambers to the Temple, the brass shields formed the accustomed avenue of honor, and Rehoboam marched, head proudly erect, as though nothing had been lost. The Temple stood empty of its chests of jewels and precious metals. The copper mines of Edom were in foreign hands, and the navy that Phoenician sailors once navigated to Ophir and Cathay rotted on the beaches. The empire lay in riven shreds. The inward substance of royal power was gone, but Rehoboam kept up the outward show. Perhaps he hoped that the pomp would hide the inward collapse of power, that the pageantry would obscure his poverty.

Shields of brass for shields of gold! Here in dramatic parable we see the tragedy of every human life in which the shining ideals of youth have given way to the tarnished compromises of middle age. Here we see the nemesis of nations that once boasted of humane justice and personal freedom but now strut the death march of naked power. Whether in the life of an individual or of a nation, the displacement of moral integrity by moral counterfeits is humanity's central tragedy.

Building Woodsheds

Shields of brass for shields of gold! This is the tragedy that befalls the majority of men. In youth they have such lofty visions of service, such vigorous moral courage, such high idealism. Then, under the pressure of making a living, or of conforming to a society which does not take kindly to the exposure of its vices, they learn to look the other way when something shady is happening. They say, "You have to be practical about these things." "Why stick your neck out?" "I'm against it, but what are you going to do? A man has to live, doesn't he?" Such a man still keeps up the outward pageantry. He sleeps and rises, eats three meals a day, appears civil to his friends and to his family. Physically, except for an increasing inclination toward baldness and paunchiness, he does not change radically. But the glint of adventure has gone out of his eye. He no longer expects very much either from himself or from his world. All crusades look a little absurd to him, like Don Quixote tilting against windmills. He started

out hoping to build a new world; he ends up holding onto his job and safeguarding his security. Thus gradually the golden shield of youthful idealism vanishes to be replaced by the brass shield of disillusioned expediency.

A hundred years ago Henry David Thoreau, the sage of Walden Pond, spoke from the authority of a life which refused to make this exchange of genuine for counterfeit ideals. He saw clearly the nature of the tragedy which befalls the majority of men when he said, "The youth gets together his materials to build a bridge to the moon, or perchance, a palace or temple on earth, and at length the middle-aged man concludes to build a woodshed with them."

Land of the Free

Sometimes we are self-deceived in these exchanges. Usually the loss of ideals is not accompanied by poverty or disgrace. More often it happens to respectable persons of comfortable circumstances—just such people as ourselves. We need to be on our guard to detect a bogus ideal when we see one. In Homer's *Iliad* there is the story of a transfer of armor between a Trojan and a Greek soldier. Beguiled by the deceptive language and the flattery of the Trojan, the Greek exchanges his golden armor for the bronze armor of the other, without realizing that he had been defrauded, thinking in fact that he had struck a very fine bargain. How many men and women there are in the world, self-deceived and undeceived, who thus go about in an armor of brass for which they have traded armor of gold!

Somewhat of the same tragedy can happen to a nation. "On this continent we have brought forth a new nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." Perhaps it is to be expected that the democracy of our deeds will have fallen considerably short of the democracy of our words, but that is not the question. The question is, Will we keep on striving to realize this American dream, or will we settle down into a defense of the status quo? Will we keep on the pioneering march toward human freedom and equality for persons, or will we halt the procession and start building fences?

To some of us it seems that a long stride down the slope of national greatness separates much of our present policy from these words, engraved on the base of the Statue of Liberty in New York harbor, and entitled "The New Colossus":

> Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
> With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
> Here at our sea-washed, sunlight gates shall stand
> A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
> Is the imprisoned lightening, and her name
> Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
> Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
> The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
> "Keep Ancient Lands, your storied pomp," cries she
> With silent lips, "Give me your tired, your poor,
> Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
> The wretched refuse from your teeming shore.
> Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost, to me.
> I lift my lamp beside the Golden door."

Now with our multibillion dollar armament program, with our peace-time conscription and our air umbrella covering the earth, it would seem that we have become entangled in the old battle for imperial power. Turning away from the causes of common human justice toward the least of our citizens, we are aiming at power, whether or not it be undergirt with justice. In a word, it may seem that we are trying to exchange our new Colossus, Mother of Exiles, bearer of the torch of enlightening freedom, for the old Colossus, "the brazen giant of Greek fame, with conquering limbs astride from land to land." To some of us, at least, this seems like the tragedy of Rehoboam: shields of brass for shields of gold.

What brings on such a tragedy in the life of a person or a nation? This question is crucial, for if we can detect the cause we will also know how to prevent it. Let us look at Rehoboam for our answer. Where did he make his fatal mistake?

He turned away from the common people to the prestige and power of the royal court. He denied the claims of human justice. When shortly after his father's death Rehoboam came up to Shechem to receive the crown from the northern tribes, he found a people chafing under poverty. Solomon's magnificent building enterprises had exacted a fearful human cost from his subjects. Gangs of conscripts had toiled without wages in the royal quarries. Every landowner had been taxed into debt to pay for the elaborate buildings. The northern tribes therefore laid down a condition upon which they would accept Rehoboam as king: "Your father made our yoke heavy. Now therefore lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke upon us, and we will serve you."

Democratic Justice

But Rehoboam, spoiled son of a pampered royal house who had never brushed shoulders with toil nor sat at the table with hunger and poverty for companions, replied insolently: "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." He had thought it was a strong stand and that the people would cower into submission. Actually neither nation nor individual is strong when it has lost fellow-feeling for persons. No wonder then that the coronation turned into a rebellion, as northern Israel raised the shout of defiance: "To your tents, O Israel." It was the battle cry of freedom.

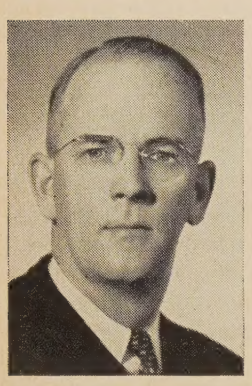
Rehoboam's callousness to human life among common people lost him more than half his kingdom and exposed him, in weakness, to the marauding attack of Shishak. It was Abraham Lincoln who said, "God must love the common people; he made so many of them." We might go further. There is universal history in the oppression of Israel. Over and over it could be said of enslaved peoples: "Their cry under bondage came up to God. And God heard their groaning."

The chief wealth of a nation, and in the long run its only power, is the equal justice of free citizens. Likewise, that individual is morally invulnerable who has learned how to value persons above things

or power. When Macbeth, spurred by vaunting ambition, had murdered Duncan, he came at last to see that he had gained power but lost integrity, without which the trust and love of those he ruled was ashes.

> Had I but died an hour before this chance
> I had liv'd a blessed time; for, from this instant,
> There's nothing serious in mortality:
> All is but toys: renown and grace is dead,
> The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees
> Is left this vault to brag of.

Let us never lose sight of the fact that every human brother of ours is a son of God. It has always been true that a man or a nation which has learned how thus to value persons is not far from the kingdom of heaven. Through love of his brethren he comes to a clearer faith in God. And through faith in God he finds the indestructible core of his integrity. Shishak may camp on the border of such a life or such a people waiting for the signs of moral decay, but he will wait in vain. The shields of gold will be secure.



A Subject No Pastor Dare Ignore

Life without Liquor

By Alfred W. Swan

Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler;
and whoever is led astray by it is not wise.
Proverbs 20:1.

ON December 6, 1952 a Presbyterian Korean pastor, associate secretary of the National Christian Council of Korea, was visiting in the home of his brother in central Korea. He had already passed through many trials and tribulations. His large family of children had been deprived of their mother, who had lost her mind under the impact of hardships in North Korea before they had fled south.

Into the little house in which this Christian pastor was staying came an American lieutenant and three soldiers. They said that they were searching for a thief; but they set upon the minister, after he told them in English that he was a pastor, beat him with their pistols, and kicked him into insensibility. An American chaplain later had the injured man flown by helicopter to Inchon, where three days later he died on a hospital ship.

Why did American soldiers beat and kick into unconsciousness an innocent Korean citizen? *They were drunk!* Yet it is still said that drinking is a matter of *personal* privilege which no one may invade. We say that it is a matter of *public* responsibility and that every family in its most intimate relationships—and the far-flung international relationships of the world—is jeopardized by the unnecessary and irrational use of alcoholic liquors.

Alcohol Is Nonpartisan

So I invite you to think with me, soberly and lovingly, about this menace to mankind. I know what will be said: "Look out now, preacher, you are up against a trend if you oppose the rising tide of drinking. Some of your good people like their cocktails and their two-hour noontime at the liquor lounge. Because you do not drink, you must not pride yourself as being better than other men." To which I must reply: "Of course the preacher is up against the downward trend. When has his profession ever been anything else but a means of helping men swim against the tide? Of course there are people who like their social drinking and are not easily brought to reckon with how easily it becomes antisocial. Of course the preacher does not dare to drink; he would lose his job if he did. He takes no pride in a virtue which is easy and even necessary for him. He has to have some virtues! And every time he sees a drunk, he must say: 'There, but for the grace of God, go I.' But he may not, therefore, be neutral on the matter, else he will be as neutral and as useful as a mummy."

There has been a period when perhaps some clergymen have been prevented from attacking the public and legislative aspects of liquor consumption by fear of the charge that it is a political matter. It is pointed out that it was with the accession to power of the Democratic party twenty

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ALFRED W. SWAN has been the minister of First Congregational Church, Madison, Wis., since 1930. A graduate of Union Theological Seminary, he has been a recognized leader in both the denominational and interdenominational phases of the church's work. In answer to an editorial inquiry, Dr. Swan wrote: "I was quite astonished at the warm-hearted and cordial approval that greeted this sermon, both from my members and the radio audience. But," he added, "I notice there are still a number of cars parked around the taverns!" The sermon was published in Capital Times, *a Madison daily, also.*

years ago that the Prohibition Amendment, so briefly tried, went out. Coincidentally, that is true, but it is now no longer chargeable as a partisan matter, for we are now to have a Republican pub adjacent to the Senate office building in Washington, where the most powerful and responsible public officials in the world may over their glasses decide the issues on which the lives of our generation the world over will depend. Do not be deluded into thinking this is a politically partisan matter. It is a moral and spiritual matter of the profoundest consequences for human weal or woe. That Washington has the highest per capita liquor consumption in the country is a shame to the nation. But it hardly becomes some state capital cities to point the finger of judgment until they have modified their own practices. In the sovereign and beautiful state of Wisconsin, the annual per capita consumption among those over 21 is 1½ gallons of liquor and 1 barrel of beer.

Perhaps it will help us to cast this matter up against some of the great Scriptural backgrounds relating to it. The 9th chapter of Genesis is the story of what happened after the flood. Noah had passed safely through it; and out of the ark he came with all the creatures over whom he was to have charge. After having washed the earth of its sin, and now setting out on a new beginning, God set the rainbow in the heavens as a token of beauty that he would never destroy the creatures of earth again. Noah had a clean, new start before him.

What did Noah do? Noah got drunk. It is not a pretty story; indeed, it is one of the most disgusting in Scripture. Liquor got into the picture right after God had tried to give the human race a new start. And the degradation of Noah communicated itself in other forms to those who were to come after him. Water may have washed the world, but liquor besmirched it. And for all Noah's prior righteousness, the last incident in his life's record is this which clouds his name. Liquor can get old men as well as young; and it can corrupt the family and smite the children unto the third and fourth generation.

My Brother's Welfare

Turn to another story in the 14th chapter of Romans, about and by St. Paul, in whom the grace of Christ had done its redeeming and transforming work. The question had arisen in the Christian community of what to do about eating and drinking in the midst of the Roman culture. Paul said that such a question should not be judged in isolation but in community. For no man eats or drinks to himself alone, or lives or dies to himself alone; but whether we eat or drink, whether we live or die, we do all things unto the whole body of Christ.

We cannot judge one another. For some it may seem good to eat this or drink that. To others it may be destructive and evil. So don't judge each other, but know that each one will be judged by God. Paul found everything clean, but if it was unclean or harmful to another, then he would not eat or drink it. For the kingdom of God, and the aim of life, is not eating or drinking, but righteousness and joy and peace in one another. Though it did not seem wrong to Paul, he would not eat flesh or drink wine or do anything whereby his brother might stumble. Happy is the man who has a good conscience in these matters; only, as Paul advised, one should not be proud in a matter of conscience. Hold your moral principles with temperance toward others. But if you have any least doubt about what you should eat or drink, leave it alone. For if you drink not in good conscience, it is sin. Here was a mature man covering the whole scope of the matter with charity, yet coming to the conclusion that for the sake of others he would sanctify himself, and drink not at all if it injured his brother.

Let's take the matter out of the complex categories of the Bible and bring it right into our own society.

A few months ago I flew from Washington to Detroit in the late afternoon and early evening. We crossed the Golden Triangle of Pittsburgh, where my father and I had both attended a theological seminary. Northwest we pressed toward Cleveland, with the lights of Youngstown on the right and those of Alliance—my old high school town—on the left, and over the highway that runs beside the village which was my longest boyhood home. I was full of sentiment on that trip.

'Midnight Minister'

I remembered my boyhood with its skating parties, fishing trips, school romances and buggy rides; my father driving around with other civic-minded men to get signatures for local option elections; and finally—the two town drunks. One was a bachelor who used to come home on the train we rode to high school, weaving his way up the walk to the village, making himself disgusting with his grinning attempts at humor with the girls; the other, a carpenter with a family which could not afford to have their father drink. Once he struck an elder in the church. The matter came to the session, and that poor workman endured the humiliation of sitting in the back pew of the church while my father as the minister, at the direction of the board of elders, read the man's apology for his deed of anger when under the influence of liquor. As I flew over the dear old place, I wondered how they were doing in eastern Ohio and western Pennsylvania now.

I found an answer a few weeks later in a story in the *Christian Century*. A United Presbyterian pastor in Pittsburgh told what happened when he became the "Midnight Minister" on Columbia's WJAS in that great old city. The first program he announced with fear and trembling, a microphone before him and a telephone at hand. At midnight the program began with his simply giving a telephone number and saying anyone with a problem might call and he would try to answer on the air, though he was no religious quiz kid and desired only to help people. He wondered if anyone would call. Within five seconds the phone rang. The first question came from a soft, cultured but distressed voice: "My husband is now drunk and asleep on

the sofa in the living room. He has just broken up the toys I bought for our children's Christmas. What must I do?" That was the start of a service to people in trouble at midnight. What bright, smart answer would you have given that wife and mother? What slow, careful and sorrowful one? What would you have given the husband and father the next morning?

That is an example of what is happening in our complex civilization now. It is no different, except more dangerous, than it was in the society of fifty years ago. Then we had no conveyances on the highways faster than the horses that we drove. Now from your plane you will behold a thousand pairs of headlights swiftly pressing down the highways and converging on the centers of population. You say it is nobody else's business whether you drink or not. And we say it is everybody else's business.

But come closer home. An informed group of local women has been making a study of marriages in Madison. In 1952, they found, there were 1305 marriages and 305 divorces, or a ratio of 4 to 1. Of the 305 unhappy couples, 157 were married under 20 years of age; 100 were married by justices of the peace, 205 by ministers; 34 were separated the first year. In 50 per cent of the cases a chief cause of marital trouble was drinking.

Cause and Effect

It is argued that people do not get divorces because they drink, but they drink because they are trying to escape the tensions at home. And there is a lot of truth in that. The shortest way out of Manchester is a binge. But it's a long way back home, brother. A nagging wife may drive a man to drink, and a drinking husband may drive a wife to divorce. There are psychological problems that are profound, and social maladjustments that are ubiquitous; but the fact remains that alcohol taken into the human system causes more psychological problems and produces more social disorders than existed before drinking was resorted to.

We now have 50 million drinking Americans, 3 million chronic drinkers and a million alcoholics, three-fourths of whom are men and the rest women. We Americans spend three times as much for liquor as we do for education and twenty times as much as we do for religion. The other day I saw the almost incredible statement that Britain is now spending half as much for liquor as for food.

It may just be that a "decline of the West" is going on, that our civilization is engaged in a flight from reality, and our preoccupation with the semiconscious dream world of the tavern and the cocktail lounge is a sign of decay. If it is a flight from reality, from the real world of human fellowship under God, then nothing can stop our ultimate dissolution.

What then must we do to be saved? That's the question with which every gospel sermon must conclude.

First, let the question be addressed to alcoholics. I'm almost afraid to talk about this in public as a pastor for fear of hurting rather than helping someone. Any apparent identity between characterizations sketched here and particular individuals living or dead is purely coincidental. The types are generalized; yet they are terribly real to wounded hearts and shaken bodies.

Alcoholics Anonymous

As a pastor I know well enough there have been and are alcoholics among us. Some husbands have lost their families; some wives have lost their children. Some men have lost their jobs; some have lost their courage and their ambition. Some have lost their driving licenses; some have injured and killed others while driving under the influence of liquor. And some are utterly discouraged and do not know where to turn.

Let me say to all such, never fear to come to your minister. He is not here to judge but to help. He regards an alcoholic as a sick person—sick physically, emotionally and socially. His advice would be never to taper off—it can't be done—but to swear off completely and absolutely. But he does not for a moment think that that can be done alone. He would therefore recommend that all who need help contact Alcoholics Anonymous and cling to that company of honest, friendly, helpful folk as you would cling to the rail of a lifeboat. Take your family into your confidence, and ask them to help and pray with you.

Then let us address ourselves to those who make liquor available to men who dare not take it without danger to themselves, their families and their fellow citizens on the highway.

As a menace on the streets and highways, this matter must be taken in hand. Public opinion ought to strengthen the arm of traffic officer and judge. If heavy fines are not enough to stop the drinking driver, then jail sentences with their public ridicule must come. Depriving the driver of his driving license for six months on first offense, for a year on the second, and permanently on the third, might help. It would handicap a man—like depriving him of a leg—if he could not drive to work. But it might protect the public.

Cameras Lie

But we should have something to say to the interests that *make their money from this business*. You say, "Mr. Preacher, the business is legal now, you know; you must not attack it." Not attack it? Then what am I here for?

The most resented attack on our national policies, it seems to me, is that we might be sowing bacterial infections among our enemies. We cannot bring ourselves to do that, or to believe that we would do that. But we are sowing constantly among our own kind the biochemical elements C_2H_5OH that destroy a million lives a year. Why? Because it makes a profit! Is that what your profit system means? Does profit justify anything? Then away with it!

The advertisers must share in this guilt. They make money out of it. And they lie. You say, cameras don't lie. Oh yes, they can, by selection.

They show men of distinction, poised and masterful; ladies of luscious delight and charm; youth with long dreams and hopes. These pictures are always taken *before*, not *after*, the downfall and debauch. Does the candid camera ever show the wife cleaning up after her drunken husband in the bathroom and the bedroom, or the children that cringe behind the door when their mothers come home from the party drunk, or the lovely, brave, strong young folks that come back retching and degraded? It's as disgusting as Noah and capable of the same dereliction. The advertising magazines lie—for the profit they make on their ads.

You say, "Preacher, calm down." No, I won't calm down on this one. I'm all fed up. I thought government was to be run by men of reason, and I hear the tavern ads are taken right into the statehouse. I understand that a lot of lobbyists spend much of their money for liquor, when they are trying to influence legislators. The great decisions of the world are made at tables where judgment is tipped this way and that by drink. I am told that it costs us taxpayers $20 a month for liquor for each of the 2,000 diplomatic, civil and military employees we have in Seoul, Korea, or $40,000 a month. I don't care to pay it; do you? And I don't want the lives of your sons and my parishioners, for whom I am responsible to God, endangered or corrupted by that additional hazard. They've got enough to contend with as it is. So have we all. Why hang that handicap on us at the start of the race?

Then what shall we do as church folk about it?

Stop Social Drinking

First, if you have any stock in the business, sell it. You cannot own it without your judgment being corrupted. Recently one of our fellow citizens was appointed to a high office in our federal government, but could not be approved until he had sold his interests, and they were very large. Selling was a patriotic and a moral thing to do. Will you do as much in your place for the government of sanity in the world?

Then let me invite you, church members and church officers all, who are just moderate and temperate social drinkers, to drop liquor from the refreshments you offer as hosts and to decline it on the occasions when you are guests. Now some of my best friends are church officers. I hope I have a few friends—and church officers—left. I love you. But won't you—young doctors, who ought to be setting the standards of right living for humanity out of your medical knowledge; and young professors, who surely mistakenly think that the glass can add to your intellectual stature and your wives' social standing; and young lawyers, and young soldiers, and young business men, and young workmen, and young secretaries, and young husbands and wives—won't you, if in your pride you think it is not for your own sake, then for the sake of those who by your social practice might be caused to stumble, won't you for them and for Christ's sake deny yourselves this one questionable practice, that you and they may enjoy the sound and certain delights of clean and sane and happy living?

Then, my fellow Christians, I have something to say to the church. The church is responsible for a lot of folks who, finding little warmth or welcome in the church, slip off for social drinking. It is all too true that the tavern is often the poor man's club. Many of our people experience such social rejection that they look for the feeling, not the reality, of social recognition and psychic stimulation in the cocktail lounge and the bar. The church must become as democratic, as brotherly and as loving as the tavern appears to be, else we will lose many souls to the gates of death.

Christian Fellowship

Every soul, dear hearts, wants to love something and to be loved. And if it does not get fellowship one place, it will seek elsewhere. What the church is supposed to be is the great family of love that throws its arms around men and draws them in. And this is where we have often failed. Ministers especially—because we find it easy not to drink, and indeed would find it disagreeable and professionally hazardous to do so—set up barriers between ourselves and the knights of the highway, who must pass the lonely evenings in hotels, and the women, ambitious for themselves and their families to be socially recognized, who therefore conform to widespread patterns.

The church, its ministers, its men and its women must make of the Christian company so warm a place of social fellowship that families and persons will find their satisfactions in this atmosphere and carry it home and out into their other relationships in the world.

It's a sad thing, isn't it, if the world is so bad you can't enjoy it or yourself, and can't enjoy your brother or sister without artificial stimulus to conviviality? Maybe the preacher is wrong. Maybe the world is so bad and so hard that the only escape from it for some people is into an unreal world wrought by the fumes that destroy reality and create an illusion, which, however, must ever remain an illusion and can never become real.

But we invite you to *life without liquor*. What is it like? With Paul, with Christ, Life without liquor—it's wonderful!

We Have a House

In going through the papers of F. Scott Fitzgerald, his friends found a number of unfinished plots. One had to do with the members of an estranged family who inherited a house. To get it they all had to live happily in it together. We are in much the same situation. We have all inherited a house—the world. We're a widely separated family of Chinese and Japanese and Africans and Indians and Russians and all of the Europeans and South Americans and Americans. We've inherited a house and our task is to learn to live together in it.—*Dr. Roy A. Burkhart, First Community Church, Columbus, Ohio, in an address before the Chicago Sunday Evening Club.*

Through Disaster to God

By S. L. McKay

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord. Isaiah 6:1.

THE death of a great leader always brings sadness to a people, and sometimes concern for the future. It was so at the untimely death of Abraham Lincoln; it was true also at the passing of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Not only was the nation gripped by shock and sadness, but many of its foremost citizens expressed grave concern for the immediate future of the country.

It was not different in Isaiah's time. The prophet himself mourned the passing of King Uzziah, for the name of Uzziah was inseparably linked with a period of progress in Judah.

Uzziah reigned 52 years. During that half century, Judah regained her full sovereignty, throwing off the vassalage to Jeroboam II. Uzziah built up the army and strengthened the country's fortifications. He encouraged the people in agricultural and pastoral pursuits, thus raising the standard of living. Many other improvements were made in Judah through the force of character and wisdom of this strong king.

The name Uzziah thus came to be one that commanded respect and confidence. People came to feel that as long as Uzziah was on the throne, the nation was safe. But in the last leprous years of Uzziah, his son Jotham, acting as regent, came to have more and more to do with the government. Because Jotham was a weak ruler, the nation's strength began another decline.

Threats to the Nation

In addition, there was the ever-growing threat of invasion from the north. The mighty Assyrian wolf pack, after a 40-year period of decadence, was regaining its strength under the leadership of Tiglath-pileser III. With bold swiftness he had conquered all the countries surrounding him and was beginning to clear the road to Egypt.

These two threats to the Kingdom of Judah, one from within, the other from without, were quite evident to a statesman like Isaiah. That he was profoundly affected is implied in our text. The Authorized Version of 1611 reads: "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord." That word *also* seems to imply that before Isaiah "saw the Lord" he saw other disturbing factors that plunged him into a despondency from which he was delivered only by a vision of the Lord in his holiness and sovereignty.

The history of the time reports enough difficulties to disturb even a statesman. The Assyrian was marching irresistibly southward. Judah's regal strength was declining steadily with the advancing age of Uzziah. Pekah of Samaria and Rezin of Syria formed an alliance against Judah and marched toward Jerusalem, burning and pillaging as they came. Ahaz, who had become associated with Jotham in the regency of Judah, was quaking in mortal fear and preparing to throw himself upon the clemency of the Assyrian conqueror. At the very height of the distress, it was announced from the palace that the king was dead. Uzziah—the name that had meant so much of progress and prosperity to the little kingdom of Judah—Uzziah was dead!

False Prophets

His passing removed from the throne of Judah the last vestige of wisdom until the reign of Hezekiah. With imperialist armies pounding at the gates of Jerusalem and the Assyrian foe not far behind, with a moral weakling on Judah's throne, it seemed to Isaiah that the death of Uzziah was only a signal for further disintegration and possible destruction.

Well, we cannot blame the prophet for being perturbed. It is easy and common to a great many people to see the darker side of life and things in general. All of us may expect to have moods of depression occasionally when we seem to see everything through dark glasses and all the world looks gloomy. Great and wise men like Luther and Washington were despondent at times. Abraham Lincoln was subject to periods of such depression that they came to be known as "the Lincoln horrors."

Isaiah was on the verge of becoming a pessimist. I am glad that he did not.

He *could* have become a pseudo-optimist. There were some of those in his day; false prophets they were called. They were those who said that the Jews need not fear *any* invader. Was not Jerusalem the City of God? Was not the Temple there, and all the holy vessels—the sacred tools of Je-

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hovah-worship? God wouldn't allow the heathen to desecrate Jerusalem! And the Jews? Why they were God's own people, his *chosen,* his *favored.* How could anything destroy them? Did not the chosen people and their holy city have a priority with God?

Others put a slightly different twist to the notion. They thought that if Jerusalem was destroyed—and they admitted that it could be—it would mean the defeat of Jehovah, the collapse of religion. They felt that God could not be pleased with any people other than the Jews. They thought that the presence of God with them depended upon the continued existence of Jerusalem and Mount Zion. Some Jews got the idea that Jerusalem *per se,* with its magnificent temple, represented the consummation of perfection. They thought that God could not speak to men, or that men could not approach God through any other medium, at any other place, at any time except the appointed hour.

Lovers of Material Goods

Pessimists, pseudo-optimists—false prophets all! All lovers of the material Jerusalem or the phraseology of a creed. All destined to be shocked beyond measure when the objects of their love crumble beneath the rising Kingdom of the illimitable God who is Spirit.

That ancient idea did not die with that early day. It is very much alive in our time. We have heard it said that Christianity cannot continue to grow and be virile outside the soil of democracy and capitalism. Maybe not. But wouldn't it be more in keeping with reality to say that democracy and capitalism cannot continue to exist outside a culture conditioned by Protestant Christianity?

We have heard of churches that consider themselves to be the only possessors of truth, or the only possessors of *unadulterated* truth, or, simply, the *only church.*

We have heard of denominational stalwarts who embrace and defend the idea that *their* organization—because of its pure orthodoxy, or its distinctive element of faith, or its glorious historical tradition—has become a sort of ecclesiastical prodigy, or the remnant of God's righteousness, and therefore the special object of God's unrestricted approval.

To teach the idea that the ongoing Kingdom of God in the world is *dependent* upon the hegemony or the economy of any earthly state or institution in which God is worshipped, is to deny the sovereign power of God and the peculiar attraction of his love.

A Double Vision

Who received the greater condemnation from the lips of our Lord? Was it not those who prided themselves on being the "seed of Abraham" and who thought *they* had the only acceptable righteousness. "Hypocrites," he called them, "white sepulchres."

In the year that King Uzziah died, Isaiah was on the verge of becoming a pessimist, a false prophet. In his distress he went to the house of God, and there he "saw *also* the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple." In the quiet of the sanctuary he prayed, and to him was given a vision of God in all his holiness, sovereignty and compassion. He acquired that day a double vision.

When Isaiah went to the temple, he had already a well developed vision of the worldly realities. He knew what possible disaster his people faced. He was not stupid in perception. He did not believe either that Jerusalem was invulnerable or that the Assyrian would respect a demonstration of piety. He did have a feeling that the outcome of it all depended upon a Will higher than that of Ahaz or any earthly king.

So Isaiah came to the sanctuary in a receptive mood. He was ready for the vision and he *saw the Lord.* He had an experience of worship, a transforming experience. Seeing God in his holiness convicted Isaiah of his own unholiness and he exclaimed: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!"

Isaiah's conviction brought repentance. His repentance brought divine cleansing, and he was given grace and strength to do the work of the Lord for which he volunteered. If Isaiah had heretofore been a professional preacher, a prophet for expediency's sake, he was that no longer. He was now God's man, entirely and eternally.

Changed Perspective

In changing Isaiah, this vision of the Lord as King changed his perspective also. If he had been seeing Jerusalem as the special darling of God, he saw it so no longer. It was the City of God—yes, the child of God—chosen not merely for its own inherent loveliness or merit but for the purpose of God's work in redeeming the world. And the Assyrian was a tool to sharpen and temper God's instrument of world redemption.

He no longer saw Jerusalem and Mount Zion as indispensable items of the God-man relationship. He saw God in his eternal sovereignty, standing high above all the cities, kings and peoples of earth, directing the ongoing of his Kingdom according to his own wise will. He saw God building an indestructible, spiritual Zion, and using even a Tiglath-pileser, a Cyrus and a Caesar to clear the landscape. He saw with clear insight that *this* time, *this* place, and *this* people were not all-important.

They were important, yes—just as any place or people or event is important in the eyes of God and in the outworking of his will. But no people, no nation, no part of God's church can afford to adopt the self-centered notion that *it* possesses the only mode of worship, the only interpretation of doctrine or the only acceptable faith. That is to make God little and to deny the majestic and unsearchable riches of God's immensity.

In Isaiah's double vision, earthly realities and earthly events were seen as holding a definite

place in a world-wide pattern whose weaver is God. He could not deny the utter harshness of earthly realities. But he knew their harshness was not ultimate.

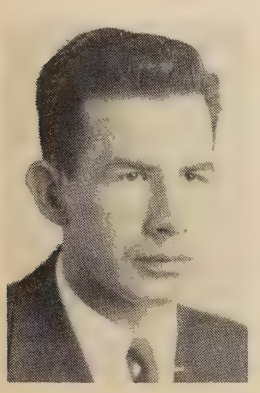
He saw also the Supreme Reality, God the King, rising above the peoples and events of the world like the dawn that rises above the landscape, giving it form and symmetry. He saw the Kingdom of God as the ongoing reality that moves through all the ages of time and beckons to the men of every era.

The people who move with that Kingdom, empowered by its King, acquire an importance relative to their devotion to that King. All people, good or evil, rise to the Light of Life or sink into the darkness of death, depending upon their relationship to that eternal King whose Son is Jesus Christ. And *only God* is the judge, both of a people's devotion and of a people's importance.

How we today need that double vision: the vision that recognizes the reality of earthly kingdoms and events, and sees the possible disaster that can result from man's mismanagement and stubborn foolishness; and that *other* vision that sees also the Lord, *The King,* who is supreme in authority, holiness and compassion—the vision that humbles us, changes us and reshapes a world!

That double vision will come only to those who, like Isaiah, go into the sanctuary of God in faith to ponder and pray, expecting a revelation.

Marks of Christian Maturity



The Man Who Grew Up

By Robert McBride

Luke 19.

ONE of the most interesting and incisive human nature stories in the New Testament is that of Zachaeus. It is a story of human tragedy and conflict, of struggle and triumph. The tragedy in the life of Zachaeus was that he was a small man both physically and spiritually.

Admittedly, it is no sin to be physically short in stature as that is a condition for which none of us can be responsible. The world is full of little men. In a former church we had among our members a midget. He was a lovable human being, though he probably did not exceed a yardstick in height. However, a rapid survey of our modern churches —as well as of the whole field of human relationships—would soon lead to the discovery that the outstanding problems facing us today are not those presented by physical midgets but those which come from our spiritual dwarfs.

A college dean recently remarked that he had been appointed to supervise a group of freshman students who "had aspired to but had not attained the stature of men." More profoundly, Overstreet in *The Mature Mind* states, "The most dangerous members of our society are those grownups whose powers of influence are adult, but whose motives and responses are infantile." One might almost conclude that the problem of our day is that too many big jobs are being filled by little men. It is the dilemma of the three-year-old boy in San Francisco who climbed behind the wheel of his father's automobile as it was parked on the sloping street in front of his home, released the brake and took off.

The unusual thing about the experience of Zacchaeus is that, in his meeting with Christ, he passed through what we might call a "spiritual adolescence." He grew from midget to manhood.

In the light of this unusual phenomenon, it would be well for us to look into the sequence of events that takes place for Zachaeus and from them to determine those abiding principles which have value for our own lives.

First, Zachaeus was a small man and knew it! An admirable quality is that which enables a man to evaluate himself properly.

During the last war it was standing practice for both enemy and allied forces to build superstructures of plywood upon the battered structures of old ships. These were used as decoys for battle cruisers. Needless to say, when the camouflage was discovered, these derelicts did not last long. How often our lives are like those battered and beaten hulks attempting to ride the storm of life.

Zachaeus was small professionally as well as physically. In the eyes of his fellow Jews he had a despicable job, for taxes were no more popular in his day than they are in ours. In fact, finance was the only thing in which Zachaeus was big, and that seems to have been the very factor that contributed to his spiritual smallness. Even in our

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day the size of our aspirations and goals for living determines the size of our spiritual lives.

One of the underlying foundations of spiritual growth requires that we recognize the spiritual smallness of our own lives when we catch a glimpse of the magnitude of the life of Christ. Only as we see clearly our own insufficiencies do we yearn for the fulness of life that Christ can give. If there were nothing else wrong with a sense of pride, it would be sufficient that it forever chokes off within us the desire really to see the Master and know him as Zachaeus did. It is a maxim of spiritual growth that we do not begin to grow until we have seen how small we are.

The second discovery is that Zachaeus was willing to climb. Zachaeus may have been short of stature, but he seems in this instance to have been long on insight, for he realized that if he was to see Jesus he must exercise his God-given capacities to climb. It must have been a torturous experience for him and a humurous one for the spectators.

A Consciousness of Need

One sees here a fundamental religious insight, for real religion in any of our lives is never a compulsory process. Unless there is within us a residue of spiritual sensitivity on which we are willing to rise, it is doubtful that we shall ever discover the call of God. We commit the unpardonable sin when we wallow so long in the quagmire of unrighteousness that we lose both a consciousness of spiritual need and the faith to look to God. There is a loving Father who waits with anxious arms, but the prodigal must say out of a yearning heart, "I will arise!"

As a boy on the farm, I anxiously awaited the arrival of the new brood of chicks under the mother hen. When the time was nigh, I was often tempted to reach down and gently crack the tip of the egg to help the unborn chick break his way out of the shell. But with a restraining hand my mother always would say, "No, son. If he has not the strength to break the shell he will not have the strength to live!" Salvation is a process of seeking as well as finding.

The third discovery is that Zachaeus came down out of the tree. Recently our newspapers reported the story of two boys who decided to try out their scanty knowledge of aeronautics. They discovered an unguarded private plane and took off into the "wide blue yonder." Everything seemed to be going along until they decided to land. Then they realized that they had forgotten to read the landing instructions. Happily the story ends with the boys getting down alive, by virtue of a lucky pancake landing in a plowed field, and the damaged airplane to be paid for.

Humorous as this incident may seem, it is indicative of the yearning of a great number of people who love to sail blissfully in the heavenly heights of religious chimera, but never want to come down to the hard ground of everyday Christian living. Peter voiced this almost universal yearning following his experience on the transfiguration mountain. It is like the yearning of an old man, only recently converted, who prayed: "O Lord, I am willing to do whatever you would have me do, but if possible, Lord, I would like to have something in an advisory capacity!"

Insight and motivation for Christian living may come in the "tree-top" experiences, but redemptive Christian living is wrought on the hard anvil of everyday experience. Christian brotherhood begins in our block, on our street, today! Ecumenicity will become a reality when it reaches the grass-root level, not when it remains on the plane of pious pronouncements of assembled church bodies.

Elton Trueblood tells the story of the stranger who slipped into a Quaker meeting and, becoming restless after a half hour of apparent inactivity, asked a fellow worshiper, "When does the service begin?" The answer came back, "The service begins when the meeting ends!" Perhaps the greatest evidence that there has been a meeting is the service that has begun. Zachaeus made haste to come down and begin the service of repayment and unselfish living.

This story is an expression of the principles of a growing Christianity. Real religious experience begins when man in a spirit of humility recognizes his own limitation; when, in faith, he rises above the crowded plains of self concern to catch a glimpse of the Master, and then returns to serve in the hard soil of human need. Such a man has grown up spiritually and he will travel in the presence of Christ wherever he goes.

Prayer for Civic Beauty

By Marshall Wingfield

First Congregational Christian, Memphis, Tenn.

ALMIGHTY Creator of the world and Father of our spirits, we thank thee for the ability to see thy creative and sustaining power in this wondrous world which thou hast made for us.

As we see thy cleansing nature in the water and wind and sunshine which wash and sweep and purify the good earth, we feel that our longing for clean and wholesome dwelling places reveals our kinship to thee, even as our deeper longing for pure hearts and a right spirit assures us that thou art our Heavenly Father.

Inspire us, we pray, to make our homes and cities clean and orderly, even as thy Holy Spirit inspires us to clean hands and pure hearts.

In field and flower and forest, in color and sound and motion, and in the love of beauty with which thou hast endowed us, thou hast revealed thyself as the God of beauty. As we adorn our homes and communities, we pray that their increased attractiveness may be a reflection of growing beauty within us.

In all of our efforts to cleanse and beautify our material environment, keep us ever mindful that we are co-workers with thee who art evermore at work in our souls to make us grow even lovelier in spirit than the beautiful world in which we live. Amen.

Wilderness Temptations

By Melvin Lynn Frank

When the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time. Luke 4:13.

ON this Sunday between the seasons I come to the pulpit not so much to preach a sermon as to share some summer thinking. You see, I have spent these last six weeks in the wilderness of the Superior National Forest. And while in most respects no modern man's experience can parallel Jesus' forty days in the wilderness, there is no doubt that the wilderness presents its own kind of temptations.

For Jesus the journey into the wilderness was a deliberate and determined effort to meet his temptations. For us who go into the American wilderness it is an *escape* from the temptations of a mechanized, materialistic, urban society. This mood is in itself what I would call one of the temptations which meets anyone who takes to the woods.

A summer acquaintance in the forest was a young man returned from the service who found it hard to accept the conditions around him. He was bitter about the way the world is being run. He didn't like, he plainly said, and he would get as far away from it as he could. The wilderness was tempting him into personal isolationism. He had figured out twenty-two possible ways of making an income in the woods, and he planned to stay insulated from the struggle and need of the world.

Undisciplined Living

The second temptation of the wilderness is to let down and give in to the creeping laziness and degeneration of undisciplined living. Most of us need jobs that require regular hours and habits, because without them weak people cannot hold themselves steady. The temptation in the woods is to grow careless and then glorify our sloth by calling it freedom.

The early pioneers who moved into the western wilderness a century ago were always aware that they were compelled to keep the wilderness at bay. A clearing in the wilderness is maintained at the cost of sweat and toil. It will close in on a cabin and overgrow the clearing. So it is with a person.

The third temptation in the American wilderness is to miss the supreme fact that its grandeur and austerity, its beauty and its vastness are the gift of God. Many of us *talk* about worshipping God when we are out-of-doors, but most of us let it go at that. What folly just to take everything for granted, as if there were no plan or purpose or meaning in it, and to miss what those who have been closest to the wilderness have always felt: "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof" and "The sea is his, for he made it; for his hands formed the dry land."

The Presence of God

I remember how a group of boys found in the straight towering pine the challenge to let the tree be like a brother beckoning them to grow upward toward God straight, true, fearless as the great tree. Of all things in the wilderness Jesus was most aware of the presence of God. The Heavenly Father was not there more surely than at Nazareth or Capernaum, but in that place apart Jesus saw God most surely.

The temptation in the wilderness is to see the sky and the trees, the lakes and the hills, and to miss the Eternal who led the children of Israel into a land of promise by way of the wilderness and whose Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness and onward toward that other tree and hill which was "outside the city wall."

MELVIN LYNN FRANK has been minister of First Congregational Christian Church, Kokomo, Ind., since 1948. A graduate of the University of Minnesota and of Chicago Theological Seminary, he served churches in Illinois and Minnesota. A member of his denomination's committee on Christian World Mission, he has been active in the Howard County and Indiana Councils of Churches. His summer residence in Superior National Forest, Minn., inspired this sermon.

The Shepherdess

SHE stands between her mate and all the things
That might deflect him from his cherished goal;
Undaunted by the lack of this or that
Which other women have, her own soul
Does not know envy. In her busy day
She loves her man, and listens as his voice
Speaks to his sheep; she bakes his bread,
She bears his children—life-mate of his choice.
And when, discouraged, he stoops to bend
Beneath the weight of other people's sin,
She loves him, lifts him up, and shows him God,
And sets him on the narrow path again.
A shepherdess is she who is always there,
Loving the shepherd through dark days and fair.

PAUL K. MCAFEE.

BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS

A Sermon for Children

By John Schott

Associate Pastor, Fairmount Presbyterian
Cleveland Heights, Ohio

IN the Beatitudes Jesus tells us that, as his followers, we should be extraordinary people, doing extraordinary things. Let me tell you about one of these extraordinary Christians.

You'll have to go back with me to the days of the Roman Empire when it was the custom to have gladiators fight in the huge Colosseum at Rome. These men, after parading fearlessly into the Colosseum with no weapons but short swords and shields, would stop before the emperor's box and say, "We who are about to die, salute you." Then, using all the skill they possessed, they would start killing each other off until only one was left. On special occasions, as many as 300 gladiators would file into the arena and hack at each other to the accompaniment of the jeers and cheers of the fans. Occasionally for variety one of the gladiators would have a net and his opponent, a long spear. The man with the net would try to entangle his rival in the net, and then kill him with his dagger. At other times the contestants were in chariots, and believe it or not, some of them were Hopalong Cassidys who used lassoes. After they had successfully roped their opponents, tying their hands to their sides, they would, in as graceful a manner as possible, slay them.

The Christians in Rome did not like these fights, for Jesus had said we should love one another. They could not understand why these gladiators, just for the pleasure of the spectators, should be compelled to kill each other. Christian pastors also preached against these fights; and one day a Christian stood up on the parapet and cried out, "In the name of Christ, forbear." Then, jumping into the arena, he walked calmly but firmly over to where some of the gladiators were fighting, went between them, and was hacked down by their blows. As he lay on the ground bleeding to death, it was noised about that this innocent Christian was Telemachus who had made a great name for himself as a true friend of the poor. So moved were the people by this brave Christian who was willing to die for a cause that one by one they filed out of the Colosseum until it was emptied of its idle spectators hungry for blood. As a result of Telemachus' courage, we are told, no more gladiators' fights were held in Rome.

Today we do not have gladiators' fighting, but we have something much worse; we have nations fighting against nations, and millions of innocent people are slain. How badly we today need extraordinary Christians who in the name of Jesus will do extraordinary things to bring lasting peace to a war-sick world.

TITLES AND TEXTS

What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

CHARLIE W. SHEDD, First Presbyterian, Ponca City, Okla. "Can You Sleep when the Wind Blows?" Psalm 3:1-5—

O Lord, how many are my foes!
Many are rising against me; . . .
But thou, O Lord, art a shield about me, . . .
I lie down and sleep;
I wake again, for the Lord sustains me.

HORACE S. SMITH, Avondale Methodist, Avondale Estates, Ga. "A Light out of this World." II Cor. 4:6—*The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.*

ANDREW PERRIN BURTON, First Baptist, Rensselaer, N. Y. "Seeing Jesus." John 12:21—*Sir, we would see Jesus.*

JAY K. HELMS, Trinity Methodist, Pennsville, N. J. "The Power of Weakness." II Chron. 26:15b-16—*And his fame spread far, for he was marvelously helped, till he was strong. But when he was strong he grew proud, to his destruction.*

RICHARD L. JAMES, Riverside Avenue Christian, Jacksonville, Fla. "The Choice between Comfort and Challenge." Luke 14:27—*"Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple."*

WILLIAM I. NEWMAN, Bethany Congregational, Los Angeles, Calif. "The Sanctity of Silence." Psalm 46:10—*Be still and know that I am God.*

C. Y. BOYD, Delaware Avenue Baptist, Erie, Pa. "You Can Help God." I Cor. 3:9—*For we are fellow workmen for God.*

HARRISON DAVIS, First Methodist, New Rochelle, N. Y. "The Man from Down Under." Acts 27:25—*So take heart, men, for I have faith in God that it will be exactly as I have been told.*

TREASURE HUNTING

A Sermon for Children

By Robert B. Hannen

Professor of Christian Theology and Ethics
Berkeley Baptist Divinity School

TREASURE hunting has a fascination for everyone. Story books are full of the adventures of people who have traveled over land and sea in search of hidden stores of silver and gold.

Most of the treasure hunting stories are made up out of the imaginations of their authors; and the more imagination, the better the story. It is possible, however, to have real treasure hunting, for there are many places where it is known that treasure exists although the exact spot where it lies is something which no one knows. It would not be there today if people knew where to find it. At least I think that if you knew where to find a hoard of diamonds and pearls, or silver and gold, you would make sure that it wasn't there next week.

There are great quantities of treasure under the sea, for example, in sunken ships. During the time of the Spanish occupation of Mexico the great galleons that carried the silver and gold across the oceans were sometimes wrecked by storm or sunk by enemies, and all the wealth they carried was lost. Also, there are many stories of men who have had to flee quickly because their enemies were on their heels, and in desperation they buried their boxes of treasure and never lived to return to dig them up again. Every land has its thrilling tales of those who lost fortunes in the midst of danger, and every year there are reports of people setting out to discover the old hiding places and make their fortune.

Lost Cargo

Recently the newspapers have been reporting the adventures of a very determined effort in Scotland to recover the wonderful store of gold that is said to be lying in the wreck of a Spanish galleon at the bottom of Tobermory Bay. There is no doubt that a Spanish treasure ship was sunk in the bay in 1588, and it is said to have carried a cargo of riches. Many attempts have been made to explore the wreck and discover the treasure, but no one has so far been successful.

A few years ago I was living at Tobermory on the island of Mull and often sat by the side of the bay wondering if anyone would ever find the wealth that lay somewhere beneath the water. I have certainly seen plenty of gold at Tobermory Bay, but it was the reflection of golden sunsets on the water as the sun disappeared over the peaceful and beautiful scene. But that was all the gold I ever saw there. I think the lady in whose house I was staying believed that I had found the real gold from the sunken galleon, for the price she charged for my room was a bit high!

The difficulty about most treasure hunts is that the wealth is hidden away so successfully and securely that its discovery is a very hard enterprise. The first rule in the game of buried treasure is that you put it in a place where no one will ever think of looking for it. That is what makes it all so exciting, mysterious and thrilling.

Jesus must have heard many stories of treasure hunting in Palestine when he lived there, so he used the idea in one of his parables. He told of a man who found some treasure hidden in a field. This man had quite an exciting time selling all that he had to buy the field so that he would have the right to dig up his discovery. Finding treasure like that, Jesus said, is like finding the Kingdom of Heaven, the discovery of which will bring great joy to the heart. To find the truth about God and his love for man is to find the greatest treasure that anyone could ever hope to possess.

Treasure for Everyone

There are many kinds of treasure to be found, and it is not all made of silver and gold. When you find a good friend you find a treasure. When you find goodness anywhere you get something that is worth finding. The longer you live the more you will realize that you can find lots of gold and still be unhappy and miserable. The finest possessions are not the material things of life but personal treasures of kindness, joy, loyalty and love. These are the things about which Jesus is speaking when he tells the Bible story of the man who knew where some treasure was hidden and did all he could to make sure that he would possess it.

I want you to notice one thing very carefully in the story for you might miss it if I do not tell you about it. Jesus changes the meaning of the story a little. What he is really saying is not that only one man could find this rich secret, or that only one person could rejoice in such a discovery. The man's name was Mr. Everyman. Everyone could make this discovery. The promise of the Christian gospel is that there is treasure for everyone who will seek it. The story of the Christian church is the story of all who have found the gold of God. It is a thrilling and wonderful story, and there are chapters being added to it every year. It is the treasure which you can find when you learn to trust and love God, and serve his church.

What Is Man?

It isn't what we think of God that makes us somebody, but it is what God thinks of us.—*Louis L. Mann, Sinai Congregation, Chicago, in an address before the Chicago Sunday Evening Club.*

Pulpit Post

Children and Crime

SIR: Seldom does anyone write anything of greater importance than your "Thought for the Month." How true it is that our society breeds its criminals! How else would we have them?

Parents seem to think they are unjustly depriving their two- or three-year-olds of something essential if they do not equip them with a holster and two dangerous-looking toy pistols. We have always opposed pictures of crime for entertainment. Children are disposed to carry into practical life what they see upon the screen. Thus the seed that is sown grows up to bear fruit in the life of the individual.

Hutchinson, Kan. CHARLES M. GOOD.

Cocklebur Corner

MR. PULPIT PATTER (Morton S. Enslin): Thanks for your cocklebur, tack in the saddle blanket corner of The Pulpit.

Just when I have fallen under the deep influence of some of the somnolent sermons, I turn to your page and am stabbed wide awake.

I was especially glad to have you deliver your venom on this "Rev. Smith" business. But you did not go far enough for me. Why not abolish the use of "Rev." altogether and just use plain "Mr."? That is quite title enough to live up to for any man, including, or as you might say, especially preachers. Then we could reserve the "Dr." for those who do us some good when we are sick or have the toothache.

Keep your shots coming, even if we do not always agree with you, and who cares about that anyway.

Yours for more pith, punch and points in sermons for both The Pulpit and the pulpits.

First Presbyterian, H. T. GUTHRIE.
Perryville, Mo.

SIR: I wish to offer a brief word of thanks for Morton S. Enslin's observations on the subject, "And a Time to Speak." No doubt it is well to take a shot of "Enslin" for the sugar content which is often found in the doings and saying of some of the saints, but I am particularly gratified at the sharp words of the professor in offering a good antidote for the rampant ignorance, irrationalism and obscurantism which has lately been fanning Bible-burning fires.

First Baptist, ADIEL J. MONCRIEF, JR.
St. Joseph, Mo.

SIR: I wish to thank you and your associates for the February issue of The Pulpit, having in mind particularly the contributions of Gerald Watkins, J. Wallace Hamilton and Morton Enslin. I am deeply thankful for the straight and honest thinking which your journal represents.

First Baptist, CHARLES C. KNAPP.
Lewisburg, Pa.

SIR: It was refreshing to see two sermons like "Do We Fear the Gospel?" and "God Believes in You" in the February Pulpit. Please continue to give us sermons of this stripe.

First Baptist, CHARLES AMOS JONES.
Saginaw, Mich.

SIR: I am sending my renewal for the *Christian Century* and for The Pulpit. For some reason I find myself turning less and less to The Pulpit. Few of its sermons seem to "click" with me. The fault may be mine.

There may be two reasons. (1) From my Quaker point of view I do not enthuse over clerics with liturgical minds. At this point Dr. Enslin has given some timely counsel. (2) Considering my pacifist outlook, I find it difficult to value deeply attempted spiritual interpretations on the part of men who do not seem to face up to the Christian ethic in their attitude toward the war philosophy.

Friends Meeting, LEVINUS K. PAINTER.
Collins, N. Y.

SIR: In February's Pulpit Patter, Morton S. Enslin seems to be doing exactly what he claims the fundamentalists are doing in making "attacks upon all who fail to misinterpret the 'dear old Book' as do they." Remember that, though reason and intelligence are important factors, Hebrews 11:1 is still the most important factor in properly understanding God.

First Congregational, GEORGE W. BROWN, JR.
Fair Haven, Vt.

SIR: Morton S. Enslin's recent tilt (Jan.) with the windmill of popular use of the word "Reverend" is amusing. But it fails to give readers their money's worth. While the word may technically have started out as an adjective, it has traveled far since then in the popular mind. Neither Enslin nor anybody else will succeed in pushing it back into its original confines. The people are against him. Personally, I never have felt insulted, abused or misused by being addressed as "Reverend" (noun). In most cases I sense a sincere attitude toward my office as a clergyman. Protestants and Catholics alike address me with it, exactly as they use the term "Father" in addressing my good friend in the rectory across the street.

First Congregational, CHARLES D. EBERSOLE.
Waubay, S. D.

Closer Understanding

SIR: Let me congratulate you on "Proprieties in Bereavement" (March), by Alfred G. Walton. It should help bring into a closer understanding two professions that have a mutual problem—the service of the living—at times when bereavement has entered into the family circle. If you have not made arrangements for republication of the article elsewhere, may I have your permission to use it in an early issue of our magazine? I should expect, naturally, to give your magazine credit.

Casket and Sunnyside. W. L. COOK,

Sermon Reprints?

SIR: Seldom have you published an issue of The Pulpit more stimulating than that of December, 1952. My file of The Pulpit reaches back to January, 1936, and I have read most of them. This was among the best. Especially stimulating and appealing to me were the sermons, "The Tragedy of Indifference" and "Life's Foundations." I wrote Dr. Hill and asked if his sermon had been printed in pamphlet form. Could this be done by The Pulpit? I should like it to give to people who have suffered tragedy of one kind or another. HOWARD W. BURDEN.

Henderson Memorial Methodist,
Detroit, Mich.

[The Pulpit will be glad to do this if we have additional requests from other readers.—THE EDITORS.]

No Home Runs

SIR: Are you interested in helping rural preachers (Jan.) to share sermons that actually are effective with rural congregations? Or are you concerned with printing sermons that you judge "measure up to effective homiletical standards," regardless of how effective they would be with rural congregations? Personally I think that some of the sermons you publish wouldn't get to first base with many of our rural congregations.

First Congregational, CHARLES D. EBERSOLE.
East Troy, Wis.

Pulpit Paragraphs

Contributed by Readers of The Pulpit

• *A Subversive Document*

ONE of the great moral issues of the past generation has been the issue of free speech. Following the First World War small communities were dominated by the bigotry and ignorance of some foolish veteran's groups which tried to pass laws against what they thought were subversive speeches. After such a law was passed in a small suburb outside of New York city, one day a wiry, dignified man got up on a street corner in that town and said, "When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another." Then the police came and arrested him; his speech was subversive. The case became famous in court, for the man was John Haynes Holmes, pastor of the Community Church in New York and head of the American Civil Liberties Union. Dr. Holmes was thrown in jail. He was maligned and persecuted on charges of everything from lying to misappropriation of funds. Then at the famous trial came the question: what was the subversive document from which he read? That subversive document was none other than the American Declaration of Independence.—*Ensworth Reisner, First Methodist, Milwaukee, Wis.*

• *The Grace of God In Nature*

CAN those who read little of the Bible know God? In Romans 1:20 Paul says: "Ever since the creation of the world his invisible nature . . . has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made." In *The Scarlet Letter* Hawthorne depicts a natural scene as revealing the grace of God. Describing a prison he says, "On one side of the portal was a wild rose-bush, covered, in this month of June, with its delicate gems, which might be imagined to offer their fragrance and fragile beauty to the prisoner as he went in, and to the condemned criminal as he came forth to his doom, in token that the deep heart of nature could pity and be kind to him."—*Francis K. Steeves, Presbyterian, Wassaic, New York.*

• *God's Vacation Plans*

HAVE you ever stopped to realize that God never takes a vacation? "He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep." He is always on the job. He is the Creator of all that exists. Were he for an instant to withhold his creative power, nothingness would result. Creation is a continuous process, and God's providence is his ongoing creative activity.

God never takes time off from us, nor should we take time off from him. A change from work may keep Jack from becoming a dull boy, but vacation time must mean *re-creation* not *wreck-reation.* There is no refreshing and renewal without God. Let the wind of the Holy Spirit sweep through your soul. Let the warmth of his Son add color and beauty to your life. The good old summer time provides a real thrill when we stroll down the shady lane with our hands in his. "They who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run, and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint."—*Dale S. Bringman, Redeemer Lutheran, Harrisburg, Pa.*

Pulpit Calendar

July 1—Dominion Day (Canada)
July 4—Independence Day.
July 5—6th Sunday after Pentecost.
July 12—7th Sunday after Pentecost.
July 19—8th Sunday after Pentecost.
July 26—9th Sunday after Pentecost.
Aug. 2—10th Sunday after Pentecost.
Aug. 9—11th Sunday after Pentecost.
Aug. 16—12th Sunday after Pentecost.
Aug. 23—13th Sunday after Pentecost.
Aug. 30—14th Sunday after Pentecost.
Sept. 6—Labor Sunday.
Sept. 7—Labor Day.
Sept. 13—16th Sunday after Pentecost.
Sept. 20—17th Sunday after Pentecost.
Sept. 27—18th Sunday after Pentecost.
Sept. 27-Oct. 4—Religious Education Week.
Oct. 4—19th Sunday after Pentecost. World Wide Communion Sunday.
Oct. 11—20th Sunday after Pentecost.
Oct. 18—21st Sunday after Pentecost.
Oct. 25—22nd Sunday after Pentecost. World Order Sunday.
Oct. 31—Reformation Day.
Nov. 1—Reformation Sunday.

SEASONS: Whitsuntide, Kingdomtide.

ALTAR COLORS: Sundays after Pentecost, Green; Reformation, Red.

(Pulpit Calendar lists dates in the calendar of the Christian year and other observances of national or religious significance.)

• *Feeling a Hand Clasp*

JUST before Christmas in 1952, the French liner *Champollion* went aground outside the harbor of Beirut, Lebanon. As the ship broke up, fifteen lost their lives endeavoring to swim ashore, but an even greater number were saved. Among the heroes was Tom Ball, an American from Sacramento, Calif. Repeatedly swimming into the surf, he pulled to safety three members of the crew who would have drowned but for his courage. His words have become classic: "It is a wonderful feeling to reach down and feel a hand clasp yours and know you have saved a life."

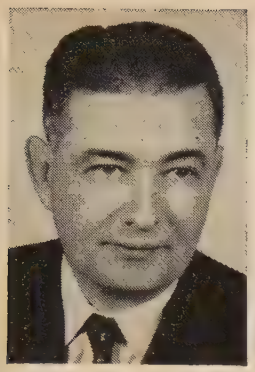
There is always a thrill that comes from such incidents. One gets it in Kingdom service. As the *Christian Century* said in commenting on this incident, there are countless ways of "feeling a hand clasp yours"—a gift for relief in distant parts, a visit to a blood bank, teaching a class of 13-year-old boys. The strength to do the task comes from the spiritual nourishment one gets at the Messianic banquet, where the poor, the blind, the maimed, the lame are welcome; where none is excluded, save by his own desire, from the presence of the gracious host.—*Hillyer H. Stratton, First Baptist, Malden, Mass.*

• *Keeping up with The Times*

THERE is a story told of Stoddard Kennedy in the first World War which has the force of a parable. When he was a padre in France, his bishop came to see him in the trenches. The bishop wore conventional episcopal breeches, but his head was crowned with a "tin hat." "Good," exclaimed Kennedy on seeing him thus attired. "Your lordship's feet, I see, are firmly rooted in the past, but the head is moving with the times."—*Ellis Jones Hough, Chaplain, Veterans Administration Hospital, Poplar Bluff, Mo.*

• *Inventions Cannot Prevent War*

THERE was a day when it was hopefully believed that the more awful war could be made, the more rarely would it be resorted to. When one reads the life of Alfred Bernhard Nobel, one finds this thesis present. In 1863 Nobel took out his first patent for the manufacture of an explosive composed of nitroglycerin and common powder. Some 130 inventions were credited to him altogether. But he is best known for the Nobel prize fund of about 9 million dollars, the annual interest on which is distributed to the five most deserving persons in as many departments of human activity, including physics, chemistry, medicine, literature and universal peace. For almost half a century these awards have been made. Nobel stated clearly his belief that some of his inventions had made war so awful that men would not dare resort to it. But the 57 years since his death, with two great world wars—to say nothing of many minor ones—have shown the error of his calculations.—*Herbert Booth Smith, First Presbyterian, Salt Lake City, Utah.*



Use of the Christian Flag

By O. Edgar Wright

IN most non-Roman churches you will find a white flag with a blue field and a red upright Latin cross which is generally known as the Christian flag. It first appeared in 1897 and was presumably designed by C. C. Overton. The fact that it has never been adopted by any convention is not important.

Many Christian people desire also to show their patriotism by displaying the flag of the United States in their churches. There is a good deal of confusion regarding the relationship of these two emblems in a sanctuary of worship. Our contention is that in many churches the flags are improperly displayed. Where the Christian flag is used at all, it should be displayed in the place of honor, we maintain.

Let us consider the history of the code regarding the display of our national emblem. For 146 years—from June 14, 1777 until June 14, 1923—various practices evolved, and many became common etiquette. But codification of these practices and resolution of conflicting ideas did not occur until June 14, 1923, when a National Flag Conference was held in Washington, D. C., under the auspices of the American Legion, supported by representatives from 68 national, state and local organizations.

Action by Congress

At this conference the following code was approved for the display of our national emblem in the church: "If in the chancel, the United States flag is in the position of honor at the clergyman's right as he faces the audience, and the church or other flag is at his left. If outside the chancel, the United States flag is in the position of honor at the right of the congregation as it faces the clergyman, and the state or other flag is at its left."

The action of this conference had no weight of law but represented the thinking of several so-called patriotic organizations. This code was followed for nearly 20 years and became the basis for Congressional action in 1942.

On Dec. 22, 1942 Congress passed House Joint Resolution No. 359 which became Public Law 829 of the 77th Congress. It amended Public Law No. 623, approved June 22, 1942, for the purpose of codifying and emphasizing "existing rules and customs pertaining to the display and use of the flag of the United States of America." Paragraph "K" of this resolution, which is now the law of the land, reads as follows:

Congress and the Churches

"When used on a speaker's platform, the flag, if displayed flat, should be displayed above and behind the speaker. When displayed from a staff in a church or public auditorium, if it is displayed in the chancel of a church, or on the speaker's platform in a public auditorium, the flag should occupy the position of honor and be placed at the clergyman's or speaker's right as he faces the congregation or audience. Any other flag so displayed in the chancel or on the platform should be placed at the clergyman's or speaker's left as he faces the congregation or audience. But when the flag is displayed from a staff in a church or public auditorium elsewhere than in the chancel or on the platform it shall be placed in the position of honor at the right of the congregation or audience as they face the chancel or platform. Any other flag so displayed should be placed at the left of the congregation or audience as they face the chancel or platform."*

The law goes on to explain that the President of the United States may make alterations in this law by issuing specific proclamations.

In spite of every attempt to apply the force of this law specifically to the churches, we hold that churches and all places of divine worship are exempt from the implications of this act of Congress. We are not sure that the First Amendment to our Constitution, limiting the powers of Congress as regards religion, will apply, but this bears investigation. Certainly Congress could not require a local church to display any flag in its chancel or auditorium. It seems likely that Congress could prohibit the display of our national emblem except under certain conditions, in which case the local churches could feel free to use it or not in a sanctuary of worship.

Some churches use no flags at all, largely because of the confusion and contradiction pertaining to such usage. In some Roman Catholic churches both the papal flag and the national emblem are displayed, with the United States flag in the place of honor. This may explain why some priests refuse to display either flag in the sanctuary. Other churches avoid a decision in this regard by placing the Christian flag and the U. S. flag in such positions that one cannot tell which is in the place of honor. This is often done to avoid conflict with so-called patriotic organizations or representatives of these on the official board of the church. Frequently in church conventions the problem is skirted by using two U. S. flags—one at the extreme right of the speaker as he faces the audience, the other at the audience's right near the pulpit—and the Christian flag at the right of the speaker near the pulpit. Thus an attempt is made to satisfy all possible objectors.

The Navy's Church Flag

The United States Navy has established a precedence which should be considered. Paragraph "C" of the law mentioned above reads: "No other flag or pennant should be placed above or, if on the same level, to the right of the flag of the United States of America, except during church services conducted by naval chaplains at sea, when the church pennant may be flown above the flag during church services for the personnel of the Navy."

We are aware that this is explained as a routine matter to indicate what activity is transpiring on board, but it does not account for placing the

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*Boy Scout handbooks, American Legion literature and all other such "authorities" base their rules for display of the flag on the code adopted by the 1923 National Flag Conference and on the 1942 act of Congress. A new bill introduced in May 1953 specifies that the U. S. flag should have the place of honor in a church except that during divine services the church pennant (not the Christian flag) may be flown above the U. S. flag.

pennant above the flag nor does it tell how this practice began. Like many other naval customs, it probably came from the British Navy. A current edition of *Naval Orientation* states that "in the large assortments of flags carried by American men-of-war, only one flies above the national ensign—the church pennant. It is not known when it was first hoisted, but it was flown in 1842 on the U. S. brig *Somers* during the religious services . . ." In the words of Captain Alexander Slidell MacKenzie, "The colors were then hoisted, and above the American Ensign was raised the Banner of the Cross—the only flag that ever floats above it from any vessel under my command."

While the church pennant used by the Navy is not a flag but a white pennant with a blue Latin cross (long arm horizontal), the fact remains that it was used to indicate our higher allegiance to Almighty God. The history of the use of the church pennant and the present understanding of many chaplains is that *our allegiance to country is second only to our allegiance to God.* This is evident from a perusal of the Chaplain Corps' latest procurement brochure, *Serve God and Country,* on the cover of which in full color is presented the church pennant flying above the national emblem.

A Principle at Stake

We believe that a principle of allegiance is involved in the relationship of the commonly accepted Christian flag and the U. S. flag in a sanctuary of worship. Some would laugh this off as unimportant, saying the display of the national emblem is purely a matter of etiquette and that we should, without objection, follow the rules established by Congress. But the church has a right to determine the etiquette regarding its flag. Others would agree with Charles Clayton Morrison's editorial in the *Christian Century* for Oct. 7, 1942 which suggested that we would do better to forget about the so-called Christian flag. But the churches have not forgotten it, and for them we believe an issue of principle is at stake.

The issue is not what is the place of honor—we all know that. The issue is this: *Does that which represents a nation have the honored place in the sanctuary of God?* No matter whether the cross is made of brass, gold or cloth, it represents our Divine Redeemer, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. How then can we preach the gospel of the new birth and *total allegiance to him* while we say with visual aids this is not so?

The government of these United States, as well as those of our several states and local units, has the right of confiscation by taxation of our personal and real property. But by tax exemption and allowable income tax deductions up to 20 per cent, our government testifies to the prior claim of God on our resources. Then by conscientious-objector clauses in our selective service laws, Congress has testified once again to the historical position of a "nation under God." What other nation on earth so recognizes that its citizens are created in the image of God and must render unto him that which is his own?

Let the Christian flag have the place of honor in the sanctuary or other places of worship if it is displayed at all. Let us teach our children and our people that we are true patriots of our beloved nation when we, in our hearts can say:

"I pledge allegiance to the Christian Flag and to the Savior for whose Kingdom it stands; one Brotherhood uniting all mankind in Service and Love."

Ministry of Music

By Ernest K. Emurian

Choirs and Choruses

TWO recent articles provide contrasting views concerning the place of the choir in public worship. The first, appearing in *The Pastor,* is a reply to a question, "May the choir in a chancel arrangement face forward during the anthem?" A distinguished liturgist replies: "It is improper for the singers to face forward while singing. The anthem is in praise to God, not for the delight of the people." Answering another query in the same vein, he continues, "Many directors prefer to have the choir face the congregation and put on a 'performance,' and they often stand in front . . . waving a baton. It is the delicate task of the minister to convince them that they are to assist in the worship of God and not to entertain the congregation."

The second article appeared in a metropolitan newspaper as a review of a concert which presented Brahms' "A German Requiem." In it are these significant lines: "This was so beautiful that by listening to the music one had the feeling of reading the Scriptures. The music was powerful, . . sensitive, . . giving to the listener a feeling of prayer and an uplifting of the spirit." Every concert-goer knows that for this program the symphony orchestra and civic chorus faced the audience, singing and playing under the baton of the director.

Actually, the choir sings for both the glory of God and the delight of the congregation. Strict liturgists may plead for the former, but those who gather for worship expect the latter as well. Presenting neither a concert nor a pure act of worship, the choir should blend the best elements of both. The minister who reads the Scripture does so for the edification and inspiration of the worshipers. There is no value in reading the Bible merely as a spiritual exercise for the glory of God. The same principle applies to the choir. To speak of singing solely for God's glory sounds pious, but to ignore the assembled congregation is not only ridiculous but pathetic! If people cannot understand the choral renditions or fail to be pleased with them, the choir is fulfilling but half its obligation.

In many a divided-chancel church the minister sits facing one section of the choir. But when he reads the Bible or preaches he does not continue to face sideways; he turns and addresses the people. Otherwise his preaching would be a farce. If it is all right for him to face the people in order to establish rapport with them, what is there to prevent the singers from doing the same? If he can communicate his message to others more effectively by facing them, why is it considered a sin for the singers to do so?

Unfortunately, the position of the console determines which way the singers face in most situations. That is all the more reason for calling in question architectural styles that refuse the choir the liberty permitted the preacher. Perhaps, as new church building styles are evolved, some creative genius will design a sanctuary in which the choir forms a single unit, visible to both the pastor and people, with the console so placed that the organist may direct when necessary and the minister in an emergency may give instructions during the service.

Even the sermon should not be so dull as never to be entertaining, especially since Webster's definition of the word entertain is "to engage the attention of agreeably." Both sermon and anthem should agreeably engage everyone's attention. Unless they do, they will not achieve the end for which they were intended.

If the music is a performance, so is the preaching. The baton waving of the choir director is no less worshipful than the finger shaking of an aroused preacher. Each is designed to achieve a certain end. And both can be used for God's glory, unless God himself has become too formally liturgical to be approached by dissenting publicans and sinners.

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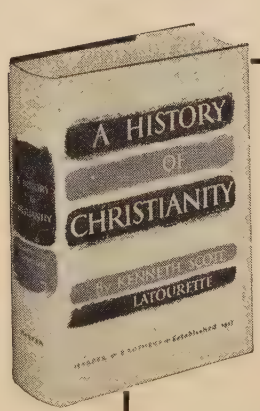

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Sermon Summaries

Forget Not Your God

And when the Lord your God brings you into the land . . . to give you great and goodly cities . . . and houses full of all good things, . . then take heed lest you forget the Lord. Deut. 6:10-12.

WHEN we examine ourselves in the light of these words, some very important points present themselves. Even though God brought the Pilgrims to America, and the missionaries to Hawaii, and gave our nation great cities and houses full of many good things—for we like to think that our standard of living is the highest in the world—there are many signs that tell us that America is forgetting God!

Let us search our own daily experiences. What would you say is the percentage of time, thought and energy that the people of our communities and our nation give to the worship and praise of God and to the keeping of his statutes and commandments?

God's Place in the Home

"Take heed lest you forget the Lord" would probably sound like a wholly irrelevant phrase to our public school system today. And if that is so, then the children who attend our public schools may be expected to treat religion as something irrelevant to their lives, and the idea of God as something very strange.

Then turn to America's homes. What place does God have in them? Is his name strange there? In how many homes is there prayer, devotions, a picture of Christ, a Bible? In how many homes do we find children growing up under the care of parents who teach them to know and love God and keep his commandments? How many homes cooperate with the church?

Finally, study America's churches. What percentage of the population of Hilo is worshipping God in church this morning? How many who once belonged to the church have forgotten him? How many church members faithfully keep the commandments of God, both according to the spirit and the letter of his law? How much time, energy and income do church members give to God? How many tithe?

Confidence Lost

Within the last decade, America has lost the confidence and respect of many nations and people of the world as a creative leader. She has gained the fear and hatred of much of the world as a ruthless conqueror. Now the question confronts us: Do we really have what is required in the way of dependability and honesty in Washington and in government throughout our country, and a really deep and working compassion for the needy to help us regain our former position of leadership in the world?

You may ask, is there any hope for America and for the world? God's answer is this: Nations that desert his statutes and commandments will eventually be wiped off of the face of the earth; nations that keep his commandments, penitently return to him, seek forgiveness and serve him faithfully will be saved.—*Abraham Kahikina Akaka, Union Church, Kahului, Maui, T. H.*

What Is Democracy?

DEMOCRACY is something we all can experience and practice every day of our lives. It is the belief that my neighbor, irrespective of his origin and color, is as good as I am—and as bad. It is equality of opportunity for all men and the practice of such equality. It is a majority without tyranny and a minority without fear. It is all this and more.

Because it is a way of everyday life, it can be lost. We can be duped by demogogs and the yellow press into race hatred, class fears, feelings of superiority and antagonisms. This is why every community should take seriously its democratic professions. It is in the local community that democracy can be made so strong and vital that we can never lose it at the top.

Rule of Law

Democracy for us means the rule of law, not the rule of men. Aristotle in his *Politics* wrote that "men should not think it slavery to live according to the rule of the constitution; it is their salvation." Our Western concept of democracy is deeply indebted to Aristotle and his kind.

One of the major themes of the history of England—and one of the most thrilling—is that of the slow triumph of the rule of law over the arbitrary rule of king or despot.

Consider again that democracy more and more is being envisaged as a tool by means of which the elected representatives of the people do for the people what they could not do—at all or so well—alone. This is viewing democracy functionally.

According to our constitution, the government was set up to "provide for the common welfare." This is subject to many interpretations, but it is agreed pretty generally now that government must in many instances arbitrate among the forces in our society to see that everyone is provided with the "minimal basis for decent health, housing, education and recreation." The Declaration of Independence made provision for the rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Government is not man's enemy —something to be feared—but his friend and helper.

Democracy in this view is not static, but a growing, dynamic thing whose functions must adjust to a highly technical world very different from the agrarian one of the founding fathers.

Instrument of the People

This is not to ignore the danger that people may grow soft and let the state dictate and control their lives for the sake of socialized benefits. Another danger is the perpetuation in power of politicians who earn votes and favors by handouts from the state.

Finally, democracy is a faith. Harry A. Overstreet has written that "our American republic can best be described as . . . the formulation of an hypothesis: namely, that average human beings can become capable of self-government." He goes on to say that this is in all likelihood "the most complimentary hypothesis regarding the nature of war that has ever been given political expression." Are we by our spiritual nurture, our intellectual development, our exercise in moral discipline, our recognition of the Bill of Rights as also a bill of duties, helping make this faith true?

Free Exchange of Ideas

Also, democracy is faith in truth. Democracies in the West do not claim to have all the truth. We believe in the free exchange of ideas, because new truth can break forth from God for life and growth. We believe, as Justice Holmes said, that "whatever interferes with free circulation of knowledge and opinions is adverse to the efficient working of democratic institutions. Adulteration of intellectual material is as harmful socially as adulteration of foods is physiologically."

Some people would stop all free discussion among us. They would imitate Russia. They forget that it was diversity of opinion, with no one fixed economic creed and no prison camp for dissenters, that made us great. When we lose faith in the free mind, we surrender our democratic faith for another and betray the fathers who gave us birth.—*H. Richard Rasmusson, University Presbyterian, West Lafayette, Ind.*

Our Need of Perspective

WHEN Gutzon Borglum was asked to carve the faces of the Confederate leaders out of the side of a mountain in Georgia, he first refused because the sponsors would allow him to use only 200 square feet of the mountain's surface. Borglum said that he was not interested because the sculpture would look like a postage stamp on the side of an envelope. Finally it was agreed that he might use as much of the mountainside as he desired.

He began work, but found difficulty in seeing what he was doing. He was too close to his work! He would get

The letter THAT BUILT a foundation

On the 8th of May, 1953, the David C. Cook Foundation was notified that it had been designated sole owner of the David C. Cook Publishing Company. The transfer of all Cook company stock to this non-profit organization for Christian education is a monument to the purpose of the former owners ...and an event of major importance to every Christian teacher.

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into his car and drive a mile away, take out his field glasses and observe his progress. It wasn't satisfactory. Some rock was cut away that shouldn't have been cut. Over and over again he was confronted by the problem of climbing up and down ladders, getting into the car and viewing the work from afar.

Finally he decided upon using a projector that was set up about a quarter mile from the work. The faces of Lee and the others were thrown in outline upon the rocks. With white paint the sculptor was able to make some drawings on the side of the mountain. Then, with chisel in hand, with pneumatic hammer, with dynamite, he could work, all the while having the portraits of Lee and the others focused upon the rock. He had perspective at last!—*Ellsworth L. Richardson, Congregational Church of Rogers Park, Chicago, Ill.*

Living with Uncertainty

HOW can we live with uncertainty? It may help us to realize that we have always lived with uncertainty. The uncertainty of life's beginning is something to give any sober-minded man some serious thoughts. Talk with your old family doctor and hear him tell you how thin was the thread that held your trembling life when you had pneumonia or diphtheria as a youngster. Better still, let him tell you about the first uncertain breaths of yours in the room of your birth.

We can make use of uncertainty to stimulate our lives. Take the heroic and progressive results of uncertainty out of human history and you would have no history worth the name. Columbus, Byrd, Lindbergh—suppose those men had been sure of everything before they started. There would have been no adventure, no heroism, no history any more colorful than that of a man walking down to the corner store for a loaf of bread.

We can use uncertainty to bring us also to a more complete devotion to those values that are threatened. Uncertainty may do us all a great favor if we use it for this high purpose. We humans are naturally inclined to appreciate more the things that we feel we may lose or be separated from. More than ever before in his life, many a young man of service age is appreciating his home—the bedroom in which he has slept since childhood, the dining room in which the family gathers, his old dog who comes wagging up to him.

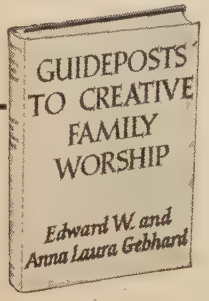
Finally, we can use uncertainty to enable us to rediscover the spiritual resources of our race—prayer, faith, the Bible, worship. Turn to these resources that we have inherited but neglected. Use them to deal with uncertainty, and our race may well find this its greatest day—the day men rediscovered the power of God in their lives.—*Milton H. Keene, Harrison Street Methodist, Wilmington, Dela.*

Music of the Heart

A REPRESENTATIVE of *Time* interviewed the director of the famous St. Olaf choir as he prepared for one of the annual winter tours. Asked how he chose his young singers, the director replied: "It is not voice or ability alone that determines an individual's place in our choir, but it is character, for if an individual is good at heart and has music in his soul, he will have the ability to sing. One can have the ability to sing and still not be able to interpret the spirit of the music. The ideal is a person of ability and such inner responsiveness that work in the choral organization becomes the joy of releasing the hidden music in the heart."—*Frank A. Court, St. Paul Methodist, Lincoln, Neb.*

A Sign of the Times

ARTHUR JAMES, who has conducted the question and answer department of the *Detroit News* for 34 years, reports that in 1768 an English-language encyclopedia devoted four lines to the word *atom* and five pages to the word *love*. The encyclopedia's latest edition gives five pages to *atom* and completely ignores the word *love*.—*Robert J. Searls, Dundee Methodist, Dundee, Mich.*



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Come Let Us Worship

By Clarence Seidenspinner

The Witnesses of Worship

LAST month we considered the importance of certain silent witnesses such as the appearance of the church building as an aid to the reality of worship. There are other witnesses.

What we do in terms of a worshiping fellowship constitutes a silent witness. The unwillingness of some Anglo-Catholics or Missouri Lutherans to worship with other Christians constitutes a barrier to worship. It implies the existence of a God who is more interested in ecclesiasticism than he is in mankind. That kind of liturgical snobbishness is comparable to blind nationalism. When a parish priest takes the position that he cannot preach in a church other than one of his own denomination, or allow his congregation to worship with other people, he at once proclaims his opinion that the nature of God is as sectarian and as limited as he is.

The ecumenical service, on the other hand, is a silent witness to the Father of all mankind who loved the world so profoundly that he sent his Son into it, that all who believe in him might have eternal life. When the people of various churches come together for the experience of worship they tear down the limits that man has erected around Deity and begin to have glimpses of the illimitable nature of God.

Amazing Fellowship

Great care, however, must be exercised in the arrangement of these ecumenical services. The object is always the worship of the Almighty. That means that the hymns chosen, the anthems sung and the other materials selected need to lead the people into that sublime transaction which ought always to occur in worship, namely, the amazing fellowship between God and man. Sometimes this fellowship is jeopardized by too many clerical participants in the service. It is not conducive to worship to have too many different persons and voices appearing in succession during the liturgy. People are bound then to make comparisons, to look for the human interest angles in the service and to lose sight of the objective of worship. A few carefully prepared pastors conducting the ecumenical service are in a better position to bear silent witness to the sublime nature of worship.

The sermon has always occupied a significant position in the Protestant liturgy. Luther thought of the sermon as the Sacrament of the Word. In his essay on Christian Liberty, he said, "To Preach Christ is to feed the soul, to justify it, to set it free, and to save it, if it believes the preaching, for faith alone, and the efficacious use of the Word of God, brings salvation." Out of this concept of the power of the gospel proclaimed came the Reformation phrase, "Sacrament of the Word," to describe the power and the necessity of preaching. For this reason, the churches of the Reformation developed a great preaching tradition.

It is well, however, for the churches of the Reformation occasionally to bear witness to the fact that the word spoken by a single pastor is not always necessary to sustain the liturgy and to make possible the experience of

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worship. In some of the early Lutheran churches, for example, a cantata often was sung in its entirety. This necessarily reduced in length the sermon upon that occasion, but such music has the power to provide a broad, comprehensive base of expression for the human spirit in worship. One of the functions of Bach, in his Leipzig church, was to write cantatas for the services of the congregation.

Impressive Climax

More choral services might well be held in our American Protestant church as another witness to the broader group base of worship. Very moving, indeed, is the sight and sound of a fine choir singing a whole cantata. During the past Lenten season, the choir of Highland Methodist Church in Birmingham sang the Bach cantata, "Jesus, Thou My Weary Spirit," during the morning service on Palm Sunday. Here was the passion spirit crystallized in wonderful choral form. To be sure, its insertion meant the reduction of the sermon's length. In that choral setting, however, a nine-minute Sacrament of the Word became an impressive climax. Other choirs might well take the entire sermon period, bearing witness to the multitudinous ways open to the human soul in its fellowship with God.

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Pulpit Patter

By Morton S. Enslin

'Announcements? Ah Me'

APPARENTLY the clerical use of rosebuds is even commoner and more catholic in its possibilities than I realized when I devoted a few feeling words to the general subject a few weeks ago. Many letters from widely separated areas have cascaded in, each with an account of the professional triumph of some local clerical horticulturist. This morning's mail brings an especial honey which must not languish unseen in my files:

"Your comments on the 'Rosebud Preachers' comes at a happy time, indeed, when several of my colleagues are in that business of announcing babies' arrival with lovely little buds. One of these brethren, a neighbor of mine, was explaining the innovation one Sunday morning from his pulpit. He concluded his comment with this stirring statement: 'Hereafter, whenever you see a rosebud in a vase on the altar, you will understand that a new baby has arrived in the church family. This evening's sermon will be titled, "How Do They Get that Way?" '"

I am grateful for that letter, not only for the additional insight it gives me into the mysteries of the language of flowers, but because it reminds me that I have long wanted to devote a few words to the matter of Pulpit Announcements.

Chaste Silence

There are apparently two schools of thought upon this weighty subject. Some of my friends—and I must confess my own feelings lean in this direction—eschew all announcements, period. They have a printed calendar, and that is that. Announcements are unwarranted and a vulgar intrusion. To repeat what is already before the eyes of those in the pews carries an additional insult, for it implies that the congregation is either blind or inattentive. Last minute memos to the pastor of coming events will cease as soon as those responsible learn that belated reports simply won't be broadcast. Soon, everything is in the proper hands before the calendar goes to print. A visiting preacher, should one be in the pulpit in those churches, is welcomed via the written word. If he were not welcome, he would not be there; nothing more is necessary, and an oral introduction—even the simplest—opens the floodgates of possibilities for a jaunty and informal response which will further throw the service out of gear. If, as I have sometimes seen, a last minute switch has sent a substitute for the visiting fireman, such chaste silence can be a bit disconcerting to both preacher and greeters after the service is over. But, say my more rigid friends, that is incompetent, irrelevant and immaterial.

On the other hand there are pastors who are never so happy as when making announcements. They announce all the hymns, despite the fact that the numbers are plainly printed and conspicuous in the frames at the front of the auditorium. And to make doubly sure, they repeat the announcement: "We will continue our worship by singing the one hundred and forty-second hymn, hymn 142." When it comes to the offering they have a field day. That part of the service is never complete without some anecdote or would-be funny story, frequently so old in origin as to seem actually new. Alexander the coppersmith is frequently in our midst. All this will assure the congregation that one does not need to wear a long face in this particular church; it may even incline some visitor to substitute a *fiver* for the *one* of his earlier choice.

To end this particular column, for the space is nearly used up, and so are my thoughts—this latter confession may perhaps attract enough darts for a subsequent column—I would say that here, as everywhere else, common sense and a feeling for the fitness of things would seem to me the one essential. As I have already disclosed, I belong to the school of homeopathy when it comes to announcements. I am chary of them and avoid them when possible. But if they must be used, they should be carefully thought out, free from absurd boners, in impeccable taste, and as unobtrusive as possible, for there are still many people who prefer worship to vaudeville—at least on a Sunday morning.

No Time Like the Present

Dishes get cleaned faster
When they're washed on sight;
And grudges are best mastered
When not kept overnight.
C. W. VANDENBERGH.

Preachers in Print

Evanston—1954

THE time is here for ministers to prepare for Evanston—1954. This second assembly of the World Council of Churches, to be held on the campus of Northwestern University, August 15-31, promises to be one of the most significant events in the history of the ecumenical movement. Every preacher will want to lead his people toward a deeper understanding of some of the issues which will face the representatives of 158 member churches from 43 countries as they gather for their first regular meeting since the constituting assembly at Amsterdam in 1948.

Fortunately three books have appeared to help the pastor at this point. The first is **Stewart Winfield Herman's** ★★★★*Report from Christian Europe* (Friendship Press, $2.50). When Dr. Herman graduated from Gettysburg Seminary in 1934 he decided to go to Europe for a year's postgraduate study. Little did he, or this reviewer, who graduated from the same seminary a year earlier, realize that the turn of events would lead him to spend most of the next 17 years abroad in responsible positions with the World Council of Churches and the Lutheran World Federation.

This book grows out of the author's wide experience during these years. Pastors who want a penetrating study of Christianity's status in Europe today have their answer in this volume.

Dr. Herman feels that Europe is more than a grim battlefield for soldiers or a delightful playground for tourists. For churchmen, it is the cradle of American Christianity. Americans need to understand their Christian ancestors during the present period of spiritual turmoil if the Church is to move forward. The author covers practically every facet of European church life as well as the political and economic issues facing church leaders—refugees, relief, education, evangelism, rearmament, communism, socialism, church-state relationships, Roman Catholic power, peace and church cooperation.

One finishes the book's 200 pages with the feeling of having been in the hands of an unusually capable guide who has conducted a challenging European tour for the unbelievably small sum of $2.50, and who has at the same time prepared one to understand many of the viewpoints and problems which will be presented at Evanston.

SECOND of these pre-Evanston volumes is ★★★★*The Quest for Christian Unity* by **Robert S. Bilheimer** (Association Press, $2.50). The author, who is the executive secretary of the Evanston Assembly, has performed a real service in providing this authentic record of the historical background, present status and future outlook for the ecumenical movement. The last third of the volume is devoted to a description of nine church families and their relationship to the ecumenical movement, each written by a recognized scholar of the respective denomination.

Dr. Bilheimer writes with a straightforward candor which most readers will find very rewarding. He offers food for both the sentimentalist and the skeptic about Christian unity. In describing the differences within the Church, he pulls no punches and makes one clearly aware of the realistic problems faced by the leaders of a divided Christendom. Too few American preachers have had a sympathetic understanding of these problems. Most of us have either ignored or belittled them. Here is real light for all who are seeking it.

The author's brilliant analysis of the "next steps" the churches face will touch the hearts of all evangelical Christians. This soul-stirring call to meet the issues which now cut asunder the Body of Christ should yield many a homiletical harvest in behalf of a greatly strengthened Church.

A 96-PAGE introduction to the modern ecumenical movement, ★★★*One Christ, One World, One Church* by **Norman Victor Hope** (Church Historical Society, Philadelphia, $1.00), is another Evanston-related publication. The author is professor of Church history at Princeton Theological Seminary. He wrote this book because he could find no work (Bilheimer's volume had not yet appeared) dealing with this subject. It is the clearest statement on the history of the present-day ecumenical movement that this reviewer has ever read. Key lay leaders would thank a pastor for recommending such a readable account of one of the Church's most thrilling eras.

FOR preparation dealing directly with the Evanston meeting, pastors will want to read and use the *Second Report of the Advisory Commission* (25 cents) on the assembly theme, "Christ—The Hope of the World," and the series, *Ecumenical Studies* (15 cents each), based on the six assembly sub-themes: "Faith and Order," "Evangelism," "Social Questions," "International Affairs," "Inter-Group Relations" and "The Laity." All may be secured from the American Office of the World Council of Churches, 156 Fifth Ave., New York 10, N. Y.

ALTON M. MOTTER.

(★★★★You can't afford to be without it; ★★★Unusually valuable to the preacher; ★★Above average in its field; ★A good buy; No Star, depends on your taste and need.)

Books Preachers Are Reading

May	June	This Month	*An analysis based on reports from leading religious booksellers and from the reading of the Pulpit's distinguished editorial associates and book reviewers.*
4	4	1	**The Resurrection and the Life.** *Leslie D. Weatherhead. Abingdon-Cokesbury,* **$1.00**
5	5	2	**Fulfill Thy Ministry.** *C. S. Neill. Harper,* **$2.00**
2	2	3	**Rediscovering Jesus.** *Jack Finegan. Association Press,* **$2.50**
6	6	4	**Ride the Wild Horses.** *J. Wallace Hamilton. Revell,* **$2.50**
9	8	5	**The Gospels.** *Translated by J. B. Phillips. Macmillan,* **$2.75**
7	7	6	**Here Is My Method.** *Donald Macleod. Revell,* **$2.50**
	10	7	**Communion Through Preaching.** *Henry Sloane Coffin. Scribners,* **$2.50**
3	1	8	**Jesus Christ and His Cross.** *F. W. Dillistone. Westminster,* **$2.50**
		9	**With God in Red China.** *F. Olin Stockwell. Harper,* **$3.00**
		10	**Preaching on Controversial Issues.** *Harold A. Bosley. Harper,* **$3.00**

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

THE CORONATION of Elizabeth II captured the attention and imagination of the whole world. In the United States the interest was exceeded only by the passionate enthusiasm of the British people themselves. England surpasses all other modern nations in its resources of pageantry for the celebration of events destined for a place in history. Her democracy has never become cynical with respect to the values inherent in a liturgical embellishment of high political and religious occasions. The coronation was a religious, a sacramental act, performed by the church whose archbishop placed the crown upon the queen's head, and who, in turn, laid other insignia of her royal office upon the altar. The high point of the ceremonial was the receiving of holy communion by Elizabeth and Philip at the hands of the archbishop. Perhaps the most solemn and solemnizing action was the anointing of the queen with holy oil in the sign of the cross upon her hands, her forehead and her breast. This exotic ceremonial, derived from the shadowy past, symbolized her most personal and intimate dedication, in contrast to the pomp of her public acclaim. All the elements of romantic appeal combined to evoke from the hearts of the people the purest and deepest emotion —youth, graciousness, dignity and comeliness in the queen and her consort whose union has already presented the nation with the heir apparent to the future succession. This great outpouring of national and imperial feeling will appreciably revive the morale of the nation so much in need of hope following the shrinking of its power and prestige since the recent war.

Great Britain Revives Her Ancient Glory

The Book of the Month

THE CONSERVATIVE MIND, *by Russell Kirk. Henry Regnery. $6.50.*

THE significance of this book lies in its bold defense of conservatism as a principle and attitude in man's political, religious and cultural existence. The modern mind has become saturated with the assumption that all the great men of history are the radicals, the heretics, the innovators. A book like this will be read with amazement at discovering (a) that the *status quo* at any given time carries inestimable values which call for guardianship and conservation by men of wisdom, and (b) that the leadership accorded to the self-styled "liberal" so often proves to have been destructive of much permanent good in the interest of an illusory "progress." From Edmund Burke to Santayana and the modern school of Irving Babbitt and Paul Elmer More, known as "humanism" (of which the author obviously is a disciple), the book traces the line of conservative statesmen and social philosophers who have battled against innovation. Their cause has suffered rout through two centuries in which champions of liberalism and heresy have been adulated as the true "intellectuals," while the conservative has been written down as one blinded by an irrational bondage to the past or by self-interest. Mr. Kirk's original title was intended to be *The Conservatives' Rout.* This would more accurately express its contents. What is needed now is another book under the present title giving a philosophical interpretation of "the conservative mind" that will rescue it from popular prejudice and invest it with an intellectual respectability which the present historical account does not quite do.

A Thought for the Month

A FAMILIAR argument is often heard to justify inaction with respect to the appeal for a united church. It is the pious argument that church union must wait for a profound change in the spiritual life of Protestant church members; then we could take up the matter of a united church. One fears that those who reason this way are only rationalizing their unwillingness to act. All our attempts to galvanize the spiritual life into a revival heat within the sectarian system end in disappointment after each fresh outburst of the revival spirit. The reasons for this are, of course, numerous. But the fundamental explanation is that Protestantism has no church that is competent or worthy to conserve the fruits of its evangelism. The gospel preached is so much greater than the church which preaches it that the harvesting of its fruits leads to disillusionment. Our churches lose nearly as many members as they gain—lose them not necessarily from the roll, but by indifference and inattendance and virtual falling away. Those who long for a revival of grace and spiritual power in contemporary Protestantism—and who does not long for it?—will have their prayers answered by helping to restore to the Holy Spirit the true medium in which the fruits of the Spirit may be conserved. We can expect no spiritual awakening in Protestantism until its leaders and people set their hands and their hearts to the great task of giving back to Jesus Christ the church of which our sectarianism has robbed him—the church for whose unity he prayed and for whose life he died.

Why No Spiritual Awakening?

Charles Clayton Morrison

For the Record—

MORE than six months ago the editors of The Pulpit asked its readers to nominate the contemporary American preachers whom they would like to see on our board of editorial associates. We implied that we wanted to know whom they considered the best among present day preachers. Our March issue carried these top nominations which had previously poured in from every direction of the compass. The balloting on these nominations has now been tabulated and summarized.

We are a bit reluctant to release the results of this poll. Our reason for this feeling is that some of our readers may be tempted to interpret the collective voice of our readers as the voice of God. If there is one truth our generation needs to learn above many others, it is that the findings of the Gallup poll do not necessarily reflect the divine will. We need to be equally aware of this truth in the field of religion.

But our readers have spoken. And we shall respect their wishes in trying to present sermons from the preachers whom they would like to hear.

Denominationally, the Methodists ranked highest among the top 20 ministers whose sermons our readers would like to ponder. Their 6 selections were Ralph W. Sockman, Gerald H. Kennedy, Harold A. Bosley, Henry Hitt Crane, E. Stanley Jones and Howard Thurman. The Baptists followed closely with 5 selections: Robert J. McCracken, Edwin McNeill Poteat, Harold Cook Phillips, Edwin T. Dahlberg and Benjamin E. Mays.

In contrast to *Life* magazine's recent portrayal of "eminent" American preachers, in which no Lutherans, Congregational Christians or Disciples were represented, Pulpit readers for these three communions selected Paul E. Scherer, Oscar A. Blackwelder and Reuben K. Youngdahl; Liston Pope; Jack Finegan and Harold L. Lunger.

Episcopalian selections were Samuel Shoemaker and Theodore P. Ferris, while the Presbyterian choice was headed by George A. Buttrick, who received the largest number of ballots returned. Following him within 10 votes were Sockman, McCracken and Scherer.

New England furnished 2 names; the east, 6; the midwest, 4; the south, 4; the west coast, 3. This geographical classification does not include E. Stanley Jones, who is pretty difficult to identify with any one locality.

Our poll has revealed names of still others who will be invited to help The Pulpit fulfill its aim of carrying the *best* in contemporary preaching. As we look ahead, we believe it is no exaggeration to say that our readers may anticipate the kind of continued guidance and stimulation which makes The Pulpit the indispensable tool of the modern minister. A.M.M.

The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

Founded 1929

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